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*The "Hammock Series"—Number Three.*



# Sketches of the West



By **KERNEL DUDLEY.**  
(M. C. Russell.)

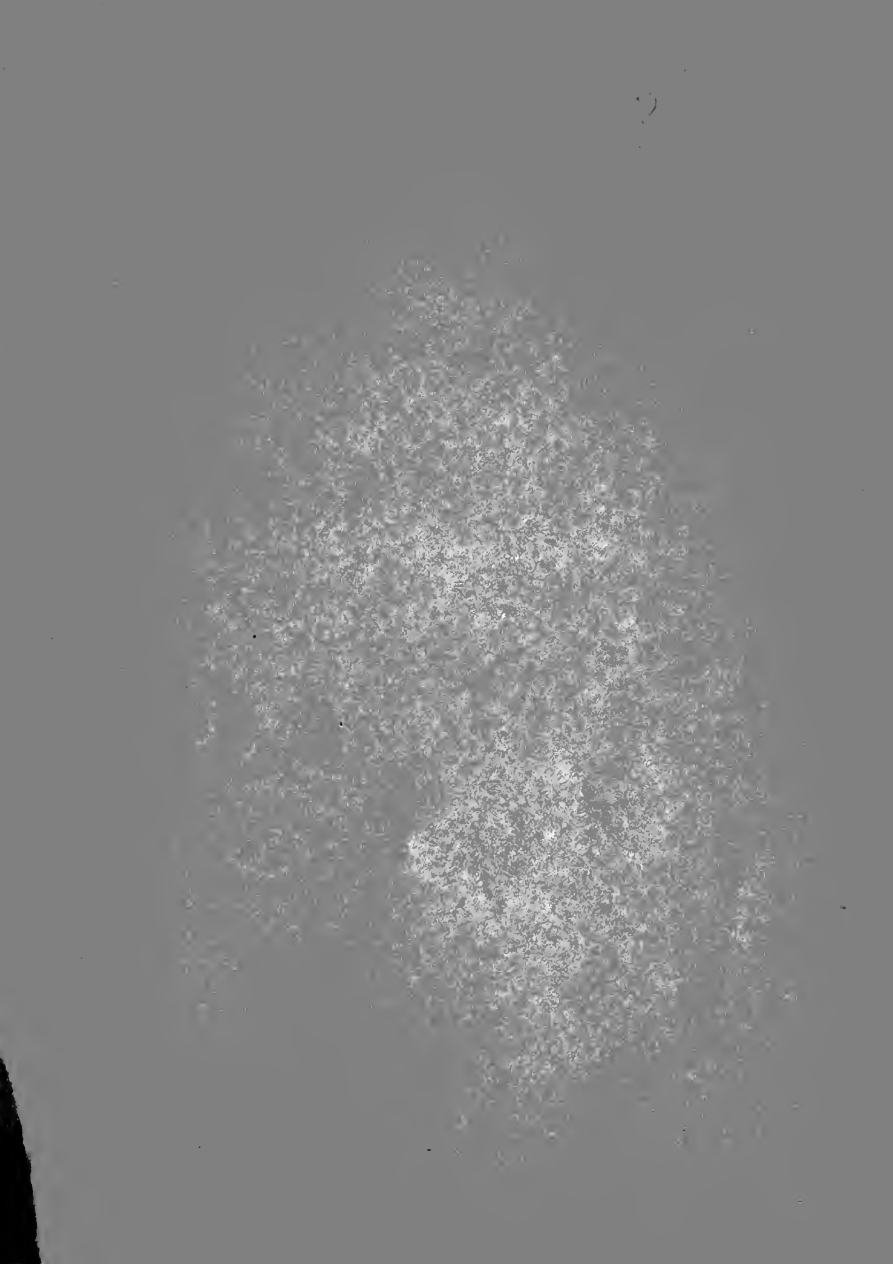
Author of "Odd Hours," "The Lost Agate," "Straws of Humor," "A Month in the Wildwood," "Evening Thoughts," "The Beaded Moccasin," etc.

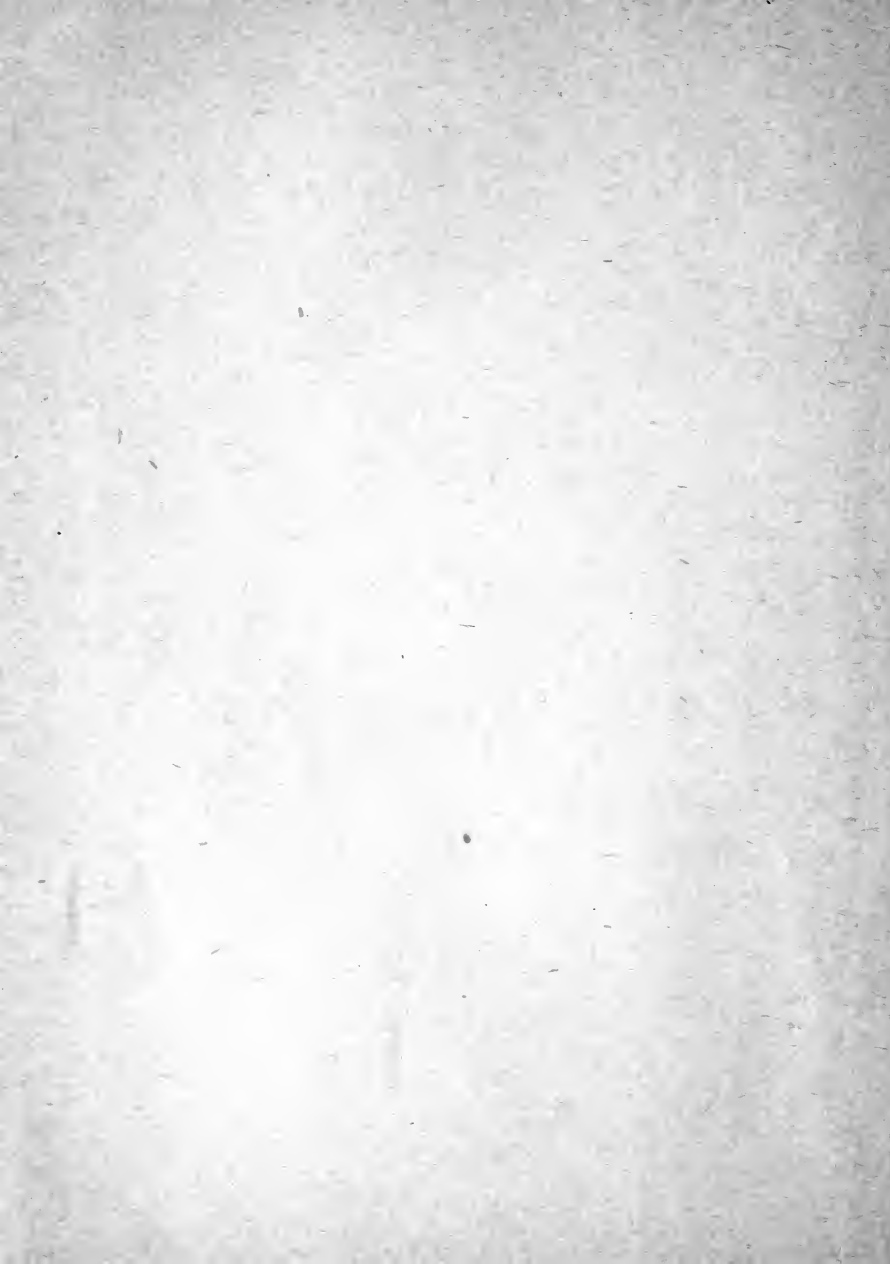


"THE RIVERSIDE" PRESS:  
MINNESOTA STATE TRAINING SCHOOL, RED WING.  
1896.









The "Hammock Series"—Number Three.



Russell, Morris Craw, 1840-



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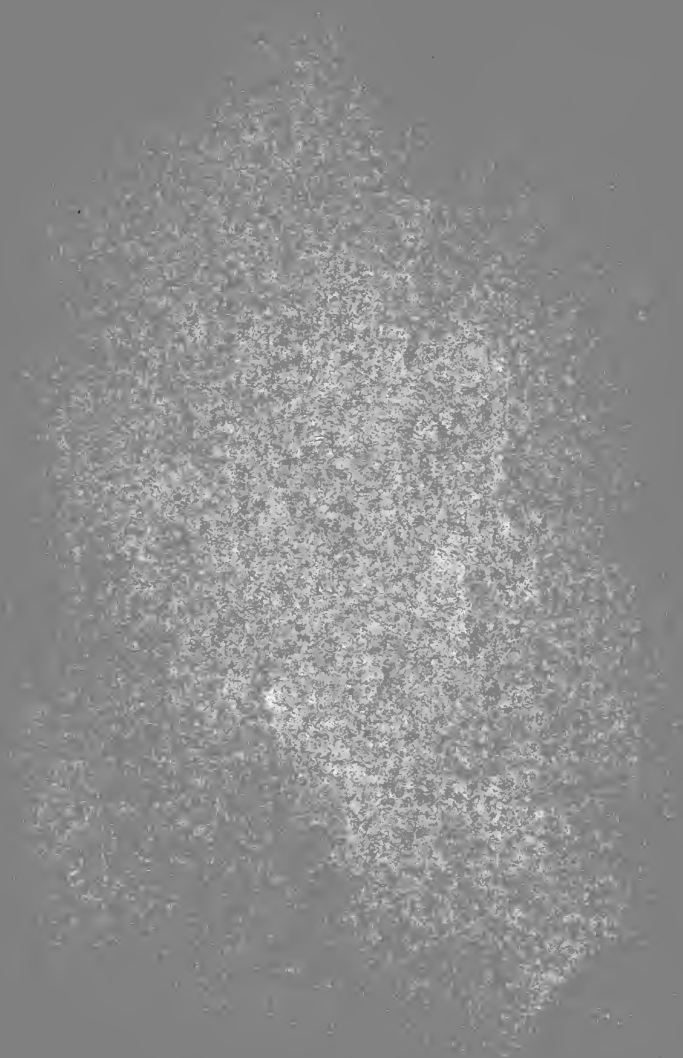
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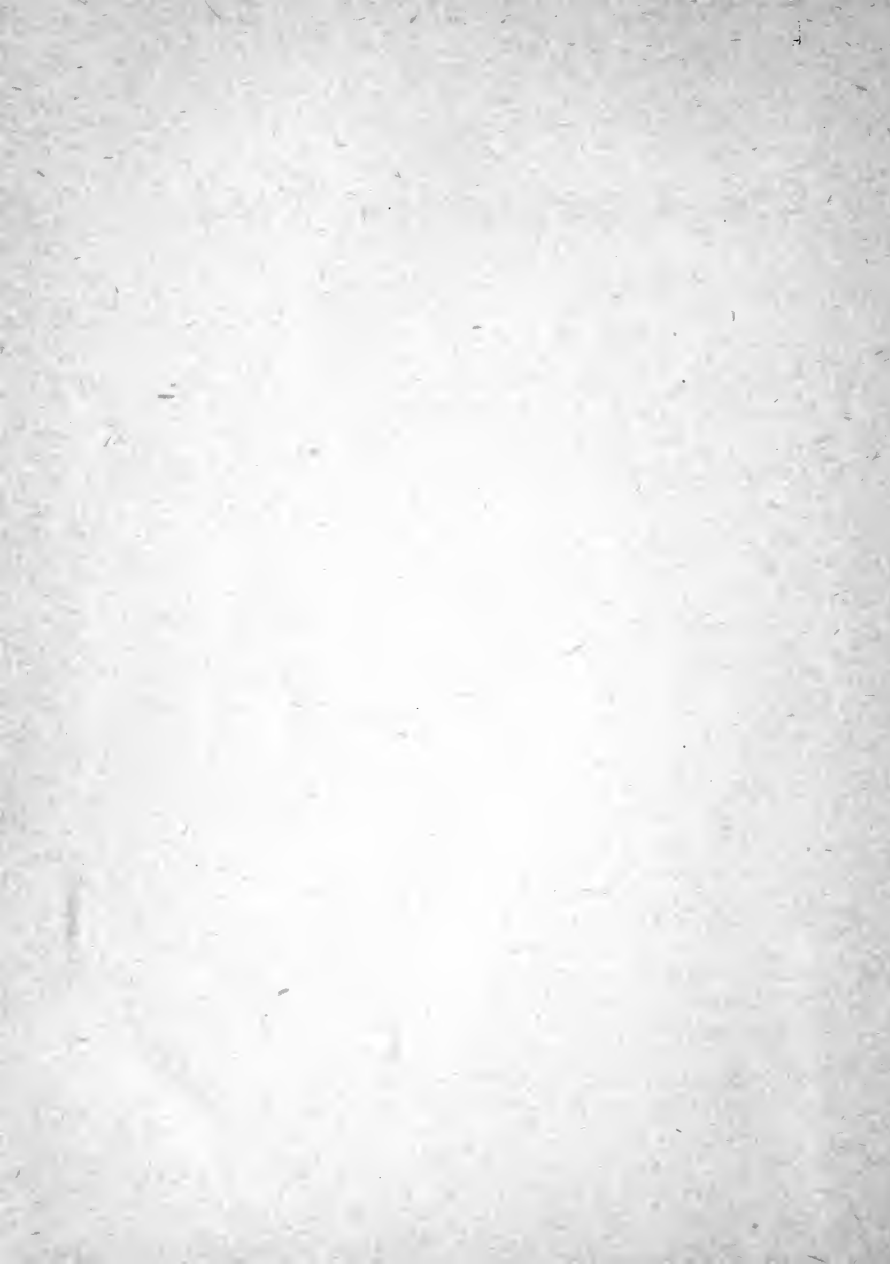


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# Sketches of the West.

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## THE HUNTED HUNTER.

JOHN SNOWDEN flourished in Minnesota from 1850 to 1857. We knew him best, and were with him, during the year 1856, when civilization in this corner of the continent was only in its incipency. John was what might be called an "odd genius" in his way, and in a crowd would not attract any special attention—we mean in a crowd of frontiersmen. Quiet to an extreme, unassuming, retiring and reticent, excepting only with the very few he chose to consider his particular friends.

Snowden was a famous—a professional—hunter and trapper, and he did but little else but pursue the chase or take fur, during the proper seasons. In the summer months he might be found about the settlements or traveling up and down on the primitive river craft of those early times, simply putting in the portion of the year that was of but little account to him in his profession. He was always a welcome guest at the humble homes of the few settlers in the Minnesota River valley; for, in addition to his quiet, genial manner, he loved children, and was never so happy as when he was holding the little ones on his knee, telling them childish stories, or, with his hunting-knife, whittling out rude

little toys for their enjoyment. He would make his home for weeks at a time with the family of some favorite friend—amusing the children, providing firewood for the housewife, and securing more or less small game for the pioneer's household; and when at last the time arrived for his departure to the far-off wilds for the fall, winter and early spring months, not only the children, but even the older members of the family were simply grief-stricken at the loss, from their humble but happy fireside, of honest, true, and noble-hearted John Snowden.

Snowden was a man who never boasted of his feats or adventures, and though he was known far and wide as the most daring woodsman in the Territory, yet it was seldom that he would permit himself to be drawn into a relation of his vast volume of experiences, during the number of years he had stood single-handed among the animals of the forest, and defied the prestige of the Sioux and Chippewa Indians. His intrepid and silent character had gained for himself not only the respect but even the superstitious awe of the two tribes, throughout and beyond whose wild domain he roamed at will. Most of his hunting and trapping, however, was done in the country away toward the head of Lake Superior, extending clear north to the headwaters of the St. Louis River, and west as far as the source of the Mississippi—this great area of country lying wholly in the “Chippewa country.” He would usually be lost to all human knowledge and sight from about the first of October until May—save only to the Indians who would occasionally meet him, and occasionally entertain him for a day, perhaps, in one of their villages, on his way from one portion of the wilderness to another. When he came out in the spring, however, the rich fur and peltry he would bring out, would attest not only his industry, but his valor in the daring life he led. He always sold his furs to one particular trader in the then embryo city of St. Paul.

It was during the summer of 1856 that he told us something of his previous season's operations, including an adventure which he said was a little out of the usual line of his experiences in the almost boundless solitudes of these northern wilds.

He had left the settlements at the usual time, and penetrated the country toward Lake Superior until near Rock River, where

he found an encampment of Indians, with whom he remained over night. The village was a large one, and with his experience among the sons of the forest, he quickly discovered that something unusual exercised the minds of the assembled red men. There were many branches of the tribe there that he had never seen before, and many who had never seen a white man — men, women and children, with their rude accoutrements, were assembled there, and apparently without previous arrangement, as everything seemed topsy-turvy about the hastily organized village.

When he entered the village, near nightfall, he created a commotion that pretty nearly bordered upon consternation. The welfish dogs, the squaws, the children and many of the men, seemed to think that some evil spirit had fallen among them, and their excitement was becoming intense, when an aged chief came suddenly upon the scene of the excitement, and seeing the white hunter, instantly recognized him, and gave him a hearty greeting, bidding him welcome to the village with almost wild gesticulations of joy. He turned to the affrighted villagers, and addressed them in a loud, commanding voice. He told them that the pale-faced brother who had come among them was a mighty hunter, and a friend of all who were friendly to him, and that instead of being frightened they ought to dance with joy that he had been sent to them by the Great Spirit at a time when they needed the strong words of a brave man so greatly.

Then the whole village pressed around, and viewed his strange gun, accoutrements and dress, with amazement; the squaws seemed most impressed with the sight of his long, brown, silken hair, and they begged the old chief to permit them to stroke it with their hands. Snowden, seeing the wonder they evinced, took his mighty knife from its jeweled scabbard and quickly cut off a liberal lock and handed it to them, and while they warily passed it from one to another, assembling in groups to examine it, the old chief motioned him away and conducted him to his wigwam in the center of the village.

Here he bade the white hunter be seated on the carpet of soft skins, and after ordering his women to prepare some rice and dried meat for his guest, he lighted his friendly pipe and, seated

together, they took alternate draws of the kinnekinnic from a long-stemmed stone pipe.

Snowden, from the moment he entered the village, felt that some unusual anxiety oppressed the Indians, and when the old chief was seated he promptly asked if anything was wrong with them. His first thought was that the Indians must either be contemplating a war against their always bitter enemy, the Sioux, or else that they had heard of a terrible defeat of their tribe by the Sioux, or something of that sort, and asked the chief if such was the case. The venerable Indian replied negatively to this inquiry, however, and told the hunter he was right in his surmise that they were troubled, but their anxiety was of quite a different nature. He told him that the "bad spirit beast," away from the far north, had again invaded their hunting grounds, and that his people were sorely troubled, and had congregated for counsel.

Snowden at once divined the character of their fears, for he recollected that he had heard of the superstitious awe in which the Indians held a certain ferocious wild beast, that at long intervals came down into their country from the far northern British Possessions—an animal which *he* from the descriptions he had heard of it, and from his knowledge of natural history, called the British Jaguar.

These dangerous animals, as he learned from the old chief, only visited the region as far south as the section in which he and his band lived and hunted, once in three, four or five years; and aside from their ferocious character, the Indians held their appearance in their country as an omen of terrible import, foreboding dreadful troubles from smallpox, war, and a scarcity of food of all kinds. The chief said that when these bad animals came, the Indians rapidly assembled into villages, and during the stay of the beasts, very little hunting was done, and even that little was done in companies; no Indian would venture anywhere alone, until these terrible creatures were known to have returned to the north.

Snowden inquired of the chief how long this animal had been in the woods thereabout, in what locality it was last heard, etc. He was told that its presence had only been discovered a few days before, and it seemed to have its headquarters not far north

of Kettle River—the very section to which Snowden was then on his way. He told the chief this, but the old Indian said he supposed now that he had heard of the bad animal being there, that he would go no further in that direction. Snowden assured him, however, that he did not fear the brute, and would try and rid the country of its presence if possible, and bring peace and happiness again to the chief's band. The old man clasped the white hunter by both hands, and assured him in his own tongue—which Snowden could speak and understand as well as his own language—that such a thing as his capturing the animal would be impossible; and that he would surely be devoured by the brute if he went within his range; but if the Great Spirit could permit him to rid his hunting grounds of this animal with the evil eye, his band would never be able to do too much for him. Snowden laughed at the old chief's fears and excitement, told him he would now eat his rice and meat and then lie down to sleep; that in the morning he would be off early; that he had a camp, which he had occupied the previous season, right in the range of the bad animal, as reported; and he thought he would be able to re-establish his camp, secure his usual amount of fur and get out alive—at least he should try the experiment.

During the night the chief informed his band of the determination of the white hunter, and when Snowden took his departure for the north next morning, the whole village assembled to bid him godspeed, in their simple yet emphatic way, upon what they conceived to be a most desperate undertaking. They beat their rude drums, danced up and down and sang their wildest songs until the hunter was lost both to sight and hearing.

In a couple of days more Snowden arrived at his old camping place, for that section, and spent the first day in putting things to rights for the coming winter's campaign. Of course, in his approach thereto, he had kept his eyes and ears open for signs or sounds of the strange animal within whose haunts, according to Indian authority, he then was—and he knew his information on the subject could be well relied upon. The old chief was one of the most reliable men in the tribe, as he had learned when he met him two years before at a general counsel which took place many miles to the south of where his band made their home.

His first night in camp was spent, until a late hour, in putting his hunting implements and his steel traps in good condition, and at last he turned into his bunk and was soon wrapped in slumber—though he always slept lightly, the least unusual noise serving to arouse him at any time.

He did not know how long he had been asleep, but it must have been well toward morning, when he was startled from his slumber by what seemed to him the most unearthly sound he had ever heard. He sprang to his feet and grasped his trusty rifle and knife; the sound echoed and re-echoed through the woods, making the lonely wilderness doubly hideous by the terrible shriek, ending in a sort of deep and plaintive moan, that was certainly the most chilling sound, taken as a whole, that the imagination could create. He listened breathlessly for probably ten minutes or longer, when the shrieking moan began again, occupying nearly half a minute from first to last, and seemed a combination of howl, shriek, roar and a crying moan-like sound, not wholly unlike the agonized utterance of the human voice. "This is the Indians' 'bad animal,' thought Snowden, "and, verily, if its size and ferocious appearance is even half in proportion to its awful voice, it must indeed be a formidable enemy—one that would test the purest bravery to meet face to face."

One peculiarity in the sound he very quickly observed; that was, the difficulty in locating it, exactly. The weird sound seemed to be on all sides of him, as it were; or, one part of its scream seemed to be at one point, while another section of it had the effect of changing its locality a considerable distance, until, after listening to the whole series it was difficult to tell just in what direction it was located. He noticed, however, that the very last part of the sound seemed to most surely point to the place from whence it proceeded. He felt relieved, after an hour had passed in studying the singular sound, to know that it was coming no nearer to his camp, and that it remained at a considerable distance. Thus he spent the remainder of the night paying strict attention to an entertainment that was as terrible in its character as it was new to even his ear, which was so well versed in the multitude of night-sounds in the unexplored wilderness. He was struck by the tremendous power of the beast's voice,

which, in the otherwise silent night, seemed to almost jar the forest with its weight. Just in the gray of dawn he heard it for the last time, and apparently at a greater distance.

After he had eaten his morning meal of dried meat and rice, he prepared his camp to resist the invasion of wild beasts during his day's absence, and after carefully loading his rifle, and getting his ammunition, knife, hand-ax, etc., in perfect shape for either offensive or defensive operations, he made a pack of his steel traps and started to spend the day in looking up good trapping sites and putting out his traps along the little streams and around small lakes in the neighborhood.

As may well be inferred he kept his eyes and ears about him—no less the latter than the former. He was satisfied that his guess of its character was generally correct, although he had never seen one; and still, judging from what he had heard during the night just gone, he was convinced that he had underestimated the size and power of the animal. He felt sure of its cat-like character, and knew that to be prepared for its reception meant simply, never to be unprepared, for a single moment, either night or day. He was convinced that it was aware of his presence, and in all probability would hover on his trail, wherever he went. He had confidence in his ability to cope with the animal, providing it did not come upon him when he was not ready for action—a thing he determined not to permit. John Snowden was simply a dead shot with his rifle, cool and determined in all emergencies, and fearing nothing.

During the day he found good trapping grounds, with "signs" indicating that fur was at least as abundant as upon the occasion of his other expedition to this particular part of the country. In early evening he again reached his main camp, without having seen or heard anything of the animal that had so terrified the Indians, both by its formidable character and the ill-omens they had attached to it.

He spent the succeeding night in complete readiness for any probable emergency, but the morning came and nothing had been heard of it. To most men this silence would have proven a relief, and been indicative that the animal had withdrawn from the neighborhood; but Snowden was not the man to believe in any

such theory, nor to relax his watchfulness for an instant. He rather felt more oppressed by the silence, than otherwise. For that day he had laid out a somewhat extended trip, which would necessitate his camping in the woods, wherever night might overtake him. Accordingly he again put his main camp into condition to leave in safety, and, preparing himself for a two days, jaunt—including a visit to his traps on his return the next day—he set off at an early hour, and passed the day without molestation, or the slightest intimation of the presence of the dangerous animal.

As night came on, Snowden prepared his camp in a clump of pines, in the midst of considerable fallen timber. He provided himself with plenty of firewood and kept up a bright little camp-fire, as indeed was quite necessary, for the weather was very frosty, although no snow had yet fallen. After his "hunter's supper," he filled his capacious pipe and stretched himself upon the ground for a long reverie and an equally long smoke. Thus he lay, sending up curls of the blue smoke into the frosty air, and dreamily gazed into the burning embers, forming pictures in the fire of many a familiar face and many an enchanting landscape, in miniature. At last when quite late, he roused up, replenished the fire with wood, and spread his blanket upon the ground preparatory to taking a trapper's snooze. But, he had not even lain down, ere he was made emphatically aware that he had other matters to attend to than that of spending the remainder of the night in sleep—the Jaguar was with him, and had no doubt been near him in all his travels of the day, stealthily, from convenient cover, watching his every movement.

The first knowledge he had of its presence, was one of those unearthly yelling and screaming moans, that made the wilderness fairly quake with its force, and the hunter's hair stand on end. Snowden snatched his rifle quickly, examined its condition, and with his knife and hand-ax in place, he seated himself near the fire, in the angle of two logs he had previously rolled together, and with his back to the fire, he crouched in a comfortable position to await developments. Occasionally, with one hand, he would reach to his store of wood and replenish his camp-fire. At intervals of about fifteen minutes the beast would give vent to



its awful chorus, and Snowden was convinced that it was stealthily traveling in a circle around his camp, and at no great distance from him. Gradually, as the hours wore on, the animal evidently contracted its circle, drawing nearer and nearer. Its screams, too, grew less frequent, until at last they ceased altogether. Then it was that the hunter's eyes and ears were primed to their utmost tension, in order that he might not be taken unawares; his wood was growing scarce, and this gave him no little uneasiness, for he knew that the fire would play an effective part in warding off an attack, for there is no wild beast but that is afraid of fire. For a long time he heard nothing, but at last he heard a dry stick break under the foot of the beast, and as it drew nearer in its circles he could keep note of its position by the occasional breaking of a dry twig under its tread, although its crouching step was otherwise as cat-like and silent as the grave. Finally, even these evidences ceased altogether, and the hunter was completely nonplussed. His fire was growing fainter and fainter, and he could scarcely have dared to cease his vigilant watch to have put on more wood even if there had been more.

The hunter was now wrought up to a much higher strain of anxiety (as under the circumstances he had ample reason to be), than he had ever been before in all his scores of hunting adventures. There he was, almost within the grasp of a vastly more ferocious beast than he had ever seen, and of whose mighty power he was fully aware. It had him, too, at a frightful disadvantage; the brute could see him, through its cat-like orbs, whilst he could not even guess at its exact location—it had its restless and greedy gaze upon him, watching his every motion, while he strained his eyes out into the darkness, all about the circle continually, in a vain hope of even getting a glimpse of its body.

After what seemed to be an age, Snowden saw what looked like two glowing balls of fire, as the dim light of the fagots reflected upon them, just above a big log that lay some four or five rods away; he knew these to be the eyes of the monster, and monster he now judged it to really be, as the eyes seemed to be many inches apart. His last chance for his life had now come, and, without taking his eyes from those of the terrible animal, he silently, and so gradually as to scarcely move at all, placed his

rifle, at a rest, across the log, put his body into an easy position to take as accurate an aim as possible in the darkness. He knew if he missed, it would be the "hunter's last shot," sure enough. The beast remained immovable, its eyes fixed upon him, and its body, no doubt, in perfect position for a last spring upon its prey, at the least move on his part.

Snowden finally obtained a position that enabled him to get a look along his gun-barrel, while the cold sweat stood out all over him, and his whole frame seemed chilled to the marrow; at last, being convinced that he had the best aim possible, he pulled the trigger, his old "trusty" bawled out its certain sound, and sent thundering echoes to play among the hills. At the crash of the gun—which was heavily loaded—the beast gave a spring apparently twenty feet into the air, with the yell of a dying demon, and fell heavily back to the ground in a death agony—the terrible creature had met and succumbed to its master, and that immediate region had been cleared of its terror to the simple-minded sons and daughters who made it their home.

Snowden did not inspect the "fruit of his victory" until morning, when he found that he had struck the animal squarely between the eyes; it was a sort of yellowish-gray in color, with tremendous legs, claws and teeth, and a monstrous head. He could not guess accurately of its weight, but it measured over nine feet in length, from tip to tip, and although furs and peltry were extremely low in the market, he afterward received sixty-eight dollars in gold for its skin and head.

In the course of a fortnight after he had killed the monster, Snowden bethought him that it would doubtless be welcome news to the Indian band, who had been driven away from their hunting grounds by the "bad spirit beast," to know of its death, and to know that probable prosperity would again be their portion. So, he resolved to visit the village, and carry with him the skin, head and paws of the animal, by way of proof to them that the cause of their melancholy had surely been removed. The skin he had already dried and tanned, as well as prepared the head and paws, so that their weight was not greater than he could pack. Accordingly, after fixing his camp in good shape to leave three or four days, and putting his traps into proper condition he

set out one clear, frosty morning for the village. By taking a direct course he arrived early the next day, and when he informed the old chief and his band of the destruction of their enemy, and spread before them its monster skin, head and ugly paws, the whole village became well-nigh frantic with rejoicing. John Snowden was almost worn out by the pulling and hauling they gave him in their grateful enthusiasm. The trophies were hung up on a high cross-stick laid in upright forks, and during the remainder of that day and all the following night the Indians held high carnival in honor of the mighty white hunter, and of the victory he had achieved over the evil beast that had caused them such discontent. They danced, beat their drums, yelled and gesticulated, and wound up the festival by a grand dog feast, Snowden being assigned to the post of honor at the mighty banquet of fat dog. The old chief tendered the white hunter his daughter in marriage, which, in a delicate way, Snowden declined. He was, however, made the recipient of a host of presents from the Indians, such as prettily ornamented moccasins, pipes, pouches, and beaded belts, while the chief presented him with a magnificent robe made of otter skins. The band immediately made preparations to scatter to their hunting grounds again, and two of the young Indians volunteered to accompany the white hunter back to his camp to assist him in packing his trophy and the long list of presents that had been forced upon him.

It is probably unnecessary to add that John Snowden never lacked for true friends and admirers among old Black Otter's band of Chippewas. It will doubtless be of interest, however to know that a few years latter he did marry the beautiful daughter of Black Otter, after all, and is now a successful trader at one of our Northwestern Indian agencies, living happily with his now educated and accomplished Indian wife—once called, "Singing Water."



## JOHNNY CUTTING.

IN the year 1857, long before a railroad was built from St. Paul to the head of Lake Superior, when the vast region lying between the two points named was a peculiarly hideous wilderness, the writer was one of a party of four who penetrated that country nearly up to the St. Louis River. Our object was recreation and adventure. At Cross Lake, where the early Catholic missionaries for a long time conducted an Indian mission, we halted for a month, with our headquarters not far from the old mission buildings. The Indians in the neighborhood were friendly, and it was not long before our party was on such good terms with them that we could leave our camp for days together without finding anything disturbed on our return. From this point we made extended trips into the wilderness, in various directions, taking with us a light camping outfit, of course including guns, compasses, etc., and carrying enough provisions to answer for the trip in view. Sometimes, however, we were thrown wholly upon the resources of the country; though we were never sorely in want of provisions, as game was quite plentiful, and we killed many deer and three bears, beside considerable smaller game, during our month's explorations.

One of our longest trips was to the northwestward of Cross Lake, in making which we came one day, about the middle of the afternoon, to an immense windfall. A particularly fierce tornado had passed through the dense forest, uprooting the trees and piling them confusedly in a ridge that extended for miles. This windfall was the greatest and most difficult to cross of any the writer has ever seen, though we have observed many in the thick

pine woods of the far northwestern country.

We had designed going some distance further in the direction we were traveling; and though the huge windfall we encountered was a barrier not easily surmounted by men with tired limbs and heavy packs, we resolved to cross it on account of the novelty of the experience, as well as for other reasons. The point at which we struck the windfall was in a dense pine growth where the trees had stood to a great size and height. Their trunks, as they lay piled upon each other, were as white as bones, and formed a very high ridge about twenty rods in width.

After a rest of half an hour, a little luncheon and a smoke, our party commenced the ascent. In our clamber we met with not a few mishaps, and indulged in hearty laughter as one, then another, of the party would go tumbling, pack and all, away down among the great logs. At length we gained the summit, the writer having the good fortune to reach the topmost log of the ridge a trifle in advance of the others, and to his utter surprise he met, at the highest point, face to face with a human being, who was known at a glance to be certainly not an Indian. Both were equally astonished at the sight of each other; for, as we came up simultaneously to the same log, the stranger gave a sort of guttural exclamation of surprise, and started backward, with a critical look and a decided air of distrust. He was not over five feet, five inches in height, and was of slight figure, though he evidently possessed great wiriness and agility, with a capacity for extreme endurance. He had a small beard, yet his face was strikingly effeminate, with a finely cut mouth and nose, and eyes that were wonderfully expressive—a pretty dark blue, and wearing a look of saddest cast. His hands and feet were extremely small for a man, and his entire appearance though weather-beaten and sad-like, betokened refinement of person and character. His hair—the most striking feature about this singular being—though evidently little cared for, hung in long, brown ringlets about his head and shoulders. He was dressed entirely in buckskin, excepting his cap, which was of mink fur trimmed with beads and porcupine quills.

Our party, on reaching the place of meeting, took seats on the log, while the mysterious stranger seated himself on the heavy

pack he had been carrying, a rod distant. For a moment we looked him over without speaking and he gave each of us a searching look from head to foot. The writer first broke the silence by an inquiry as to who he was. He said he wasn't anybody, and returned the question. We briefly informed him who we were, and what we were there for—our mission in that region being nothing in particular. He asked us where we were going; and we told him it was our wish to go in the direction we were traveling as far as the upper Kettle River. In response to our questions regarding that region, and the exact direction to it, he informed us in a few words that we would be quite the opposite from welcome in the Kettle River country, as the Indians would consider us intruders upon their hunting-grounds, and might conclude to make it extremely warm for us.

This man did not seem disposed to do much talking, and his mode of speech was decidedly strange. There was a peculiar cut-off to every sentence, and to almost every word. We judged this to be owing to his long association with the Indians, as in his speech there was the guttural tone common to most Indian languages. In reply to our question as to the location of his headquarters, he told us that they were almost anywhere, but that just then his camp was three miles distant, where, as it was nearly night, we would be made welcome, if we chose to accompany him. After a brief consultation we determined to accept his invitation, because, aside from a desire to find a camp already made for the night, we had a strong desire to learn more of the peculiar being we had met in so singular a manner in so outlandish a part of the country.

We all shouldered our packs, and were soon in Indian file, following our guide through the mossy cranberry marshes and over pine ridges. He carried a pack consisting of furs, deer skins, dried meat, and a few blackened and battered utensils, the whole weighing nearly one hundred pounds. He packed in true Indian style. The bundle was secured by rawhide thongs, and around it a wide belt of the same, which he passed over his head, allowing the band to rest on his forehead. When he arose to his feet the pack rested at the small of the back, just above the hips. It was a perfect wonder to our party to see a person of so slight a

build carry such a load, and that, too, with such apparent ease. He traveled fast, and halted but once in the three miles, and then for a moment only, whilst the strongest man in our party, with but half the load, was well-nigh fagged out in keeping pace with our guide.

We found his camp in a romantic spot, on the shore of a small lake, the waters of which were clearer, if possible, than plate glass, whence flowed a beautiful little stream, winding down through a deep, mossy dell, with evergreens along either bank, and brilliant-colored vines reflecting their varied beauty in the crystal-like water below. Both lake and brook were inhabited by thousands of lucious trout. His camp consisted of a roomy, birch-bark wigwam, in which there were evidences of scrupulous neatness and good odor. At one end was a low, wide bunk, and the bed was wholly made of skins and furs. First was a lot of dried grass, gathered from the neighboring meadows; on the top of this were spread sheets made of deer-skins, which had been tanned after the peculiar mode of the Indians, and were as soft as velvet. At the head was a large pillow filled with moss. Over all were two fur spreads or robes, which had also been tanned so as to leave them pliable as a woolen blanket. At the side of the wigwam was a rude table made of rawhide stretched over stakes which were driven into the ground. Above this were two or three ingeniously constructed shelves, containing various articles. Of the latter, some bore evidence of being the productions of civilization, and others were ingenious and pretty specimens of the handiwork of native women. In one corner were arranged, in an orderly way, quite a number of steel traps of various sizes; and close by was a receptacle for a hunting-knife, ammunition, gun, tomahawk and other implements of the chase. The floor, which was the ground, was covered with coarse matting, braided from the marsh-flag. Two or three rude stools, in addition, composed the inside furnishing of this strange abode. In a hasty glance at the articles on the shelves, we discovered a small, cracked mirror, in a frame of bark, a dingy copy of Scott's Poems, and three or four other very smoky-looking volumes, and a well worn picture case, but we did not venture to peer inside the dingy case to see what picture might be there though we hazard-

ed a silent guess, which several years afterward we found to have been a correct surmise. His fireplace was outside, and directly in front of the aperture which served as a door. It consisted of two forked sticks driven into the ground, with a pole across, from which latter an extremely ancient-looking iron kettle was suspended by a small iron chain. This kettle, with a broken skillet, a dented copper vessel and a birchen bucket, composed the culinary outfit.

- Seeing we were tired, our entertainer asked us to enter his wigwam and rest, whilst he prepared some supper. We complied; but the writer, however, after resting inside for a few minutes, volunteered to assist in preparing the meal. After starting a fire by means of a flint and steel and some dry spunk-wood, the host produced from behind the wigwam what he called his "trout-persuader," and started for the lake beach. This contrivance was simply a net, about three feet square, finely and evenly woven from the fiber of a water plant, and stretched on two parallel sticks, held in position by two cross sticks, lashed at each end by thongs of rawhide, the tension being such as to admit of the net bagging down slightly in the middle. It was with no little curiosity that we followed him closely to the shore of the lake, to see how he could capture the wary trout with such a contrivance; and indeed, as we soon saw, no ordinary mortal could have succeeded with it. He motioned us to remain a little back, while he, taking the net by the two handles, glided softly along a small bay, driving a school of the speckled treasures quietly before him, until he came near a sharp nook, which, through a narrow passage, led to a miniature bay within, a few feet across. When the school was about opposite the entrance to this, he made a quick upward and outward motion of the net, and simultaneously with this he leaped, with the quickness of a flash, and set his net nearly perpendicular in the mouth of this natural trap. Of course, the fish, recovering from their first fright, would dart instantly for deep water again, but not until his net was snugly placed in their way. He had made it to fit the entrance to the grotto exactly, and when the trout darted for their freedom they ran into the bag of the net, and the next instant found themselves—a dozen or more—landed high and dry



upon the beach by another motion of their captor, equal in quickness to the one that had imprisoned them.

What with dried meat, chipped up and stewed in the iron pot, trout fried in deer's marrow, wild rice, the bread our party carried, seasoned by the keenest of appetites, our supper and breakfast with this lone man of the wilderness were among the most enjoyable of all the meals we ever ate.

After supper, as we all reclined about the camp-fire, enjoying our pipes—all save our host, who said he never used tobacco in any form—we essayed to draw out the mysterious stranger, and ascertain if possible, something of his history. This, however, we knew to be a delicate task, as his manner, though extremely courteous and hospitable, seemed distant and reticent, save on topics of the present. Nevertheless we resolved to try, though every inquiry was put in the most casual way lest we should arouse in him a feeling of resentment, or a suspicion that we intended to be impertinent. In response to various questions, we were informed that it had been several years since he had seen a white man: that he never went out to the trading-posts, but did his trading through the Indians; that he was thirty years of age, and had entered that region alone when a very young man, and never intended to abandon the wild life he had led so long—a life of constant adventure and hardship, with no companion save his gun, and holding no intercourse with the human family save the Indians of that remote region, nor often with them; that the Indians were friendly at all times when he met them; that his name among the whites was John Cutting, but that the Indians had named him "The Silent Walker."

It was with some hesitation that he told us his parents and relatives were among the first families of central Illinois, and wealthy. His reason for abandoning a life of ease and luxury, at an age when he was just entering upon the joys and pleasures of the world, he declined to state.

After breakfast in the morning we made preparations for returning to our camp at Cross Lake, and Cutting said he would accompany us for a few miles, as soon as he could put his camp in order and get a few things packed for a tramp; that he was go-

ing to the lower Grindstone River on a trapping expedition, to be gone several days.

Accordingly, an hour after the morning meal, we all started, with him as our guide again. Just before noon we reached a trail, by taking which, Cutting said we could save a considerable distance, and pointing in the direction we must go, without saying a word he grasped each one of us warmly by the hand, turned sharply to the left of our course, and in an instant more "The Silent Walker" had disappeared in the forest.

Nearly five years after our exploring party had returned from the remote region of the St. Louis River, the tocsin of civil war was sounded, and thousands of the young men of the country quickly responded, the writer of these pages among the rest. I—to speak in the first person singular—went fifty miles alone and on foot to the barracks, found the commandant and mustering officer promptly, and told him I desired to enter the first regiment from my State as a private soldier. He informed me that my chance was hardly good even in the last company of the second regiment, so rapidly had volunteers poured in at all hours during the day and night. Although reluctant to join any but the regiment of my choice, yet enthusiastic in the idea of serving my country, I was mustered and directed to report for duty to Capt. —, whose quarters in a certain section of the fort were pointed out to me. Going thither, I was admitted to a large room containing nearly a hundred new recruits. All was bustle and confusion. The captain gave me a suit of "regimentals," knapsack and blanket, and the orderly sergeant assigned me to a bunk with another recruit in the quarters, and I found him engaged in fixing up the bed. As I stepped forward he turned about, looking me squarely in the face, as if to see what sort of a chum had been given him. The recognition was mutual and almost instantaneous—my bunk-companion was none other than Johnny Cutting, "The Silent Walker." To say that each was astonished beyond measure at this second strange meeting, but feebly expresses it; and that night we talked long and freely concerning matters that mutually interested us.

Cutting seemed to consider himself very fortunate to have met

some one whose face he had seen before; and during the time that followed, although he was ever courteous and obliging to all his companions in arms, he was never known to converse with those about him much more than the rules of war demanded, excepting with the writer, whom he always sought to be near, and to whose mess he was always sure to belong.

No man in the Union army was a better soldier than Johnny Cutting. He always kept his clothing clean and orderly, his gun and equipments bright and ready for use at an instant's notice. He was was orderly to an extreme: and his example in the company was more potent in enforcing good order and discipline than the scowls of an exacting officer. When the long roll was sounded, calling the regiment to arms, night or day, he was sure to be the first to report on the company's parade ground, in perfect readiness for battle. I never saw a man who was as quick, and yet undemonstrative, in his motions as he, nor a soldier who persistently sought to be at the front in every danger and hardship that presented, of which there was no lack. His favorite place was on the picket line, and his commander was not long in learning his value in the most responsible position of a soldier—that of a picket in front of the enemy.

Little by little, and in a disconnected way, I learned the story of Johnny Cutting's life: and it was, in its beginning, the old, old story, of love and disappointment.

He was the son of a wealthy Illinois farmer. From childhood he had grown up in company with Mary Allen, the sweet, blue-eyed daughter of a near neighbor. They had attended school together, from the days of their a, b, c's until they had graduated with honor from the best institution of learning in that part of the State. They had spent their vacations mostly in each other's company, and their hearts' tendrils had become so entwined, that to part them would be worse than death itself—at least to the warm and devoted nature of Johnny Cutting. The story of his love may be a short one, though no number of strong words could do more than justice to a man with such a heart and nature as his—true to every instinct of nobility and honor, with an unwavering fidelity to all convictions of right, and whose affection, once bestowed, was placed forever and unretrievably.

When Mary Allen weakened in her love for Johnny Cutting, and in the daze of an hour gave way to the blandishments of a fashionably-dressed and jewel-bespangled sprig from the city, who spent his summer vacation in the neighborhood, she blasted the life of one she knew to be her equal, and whose love for her had so increased in the course of their many years of companionship as to attain a strength and tenderness which the trials of a life-time could not tarnish.

Alone, in her father's grounds, beneath the twinkling stars, they met for the last time, and the very rose-leaves let fall their dewy tears as she told him of her perfidious rejection of his hand for that of another. Without a word of reproach, he passed down the avenue into the road, his frame quivering like an aspen in a storm. As he closed the gate he turned around and halted but for an instant, to catch one more glimpse of her who had been the idol of his life. With uncovered head he waved her a parting kiss, exclaiming in a husky voice, "God bless you, Mary, my darling! Farewell forever!" And he was lost to Mary Allen's sight for all time.

He hastily bade adieu to his parents, telling them he contemplated a trip to the northwestern part of the country. Packing together a few things, and placing his savings in his purse, he embarked on a Mississippi river steamer, buying a ticket for the young city of St. Paul, at which place he turned his back forever, as he intended, upon his own race.

Almost at the very outbreak of the war he chanced to hear the story of the attack on Fort Sumter, and became aware of the certainty of a gigantic civil war. He sat musing by his camp-fire the entire night upon the stirring news he had heard, by the merest chance, through a trader who was making a trip through that region, and whom he had met at a gathering of Indians assembled for traffic. By morning his decision was reached. He gave all his effects to an old Indian family, they having nearly always, through their attachment for him, camped in his vicinity, moving their camp whenever he moved his, from one section of that wilderness region to another. He started the day following that on which he had received the news, and in three days travel he reached Fort Snelling, and was mustered into the army but an

hour or two in advance of the writer. He had determined, during his night-revery far away in the wilderness, to do the only thing left him to do, of any value to himself or others in the world, by placing himself at the disposal of his country in her hour of need, and if needs be lay his life upon her altar.

His regiment passed through many battles, and suffered its full share of the hardships and casualties of the field, and Johnny Cutting stood in the front rank of his command without the loss of an hour from duty. He had been in the thickest of many a bloody battle, and come out with scarcely a scratch. He sought the hottest of the fight, steadily and coolly loading and firing, while in the use of the bayonet his quickness of movement and unwavering courage made him a terrible adversary.

At the desperate battle of Mission Ridge, the Union army had to charge up the bold range of hills in an endeavor to get a footing on the uplands, where the Confederate army was massed in great force. The Federals were repulsed again and again in their terrible and heroic efforts to capture the Confederate batteries posted along the brink of the ridge which were dealing death in all directions among the bluecoats in the plain below.

The day wore on in its terrible work, and the hillsides and valley were thickly strewn with the dead and the dying; but the heights were taken, and about the Confederate batteries the final struggle ensued. The after-spectacle told plainly the tale of the carnage and the stubbornness with which the enemy had defended their guns. The depleted ranks of the Federals needed no explanation of what the victory had cost them, as the storming regiments bivouacked on the field of blood.

Among the dead gathered for interment the next day, the hero of this sketch was found, with many other bodies, on the verge of a ledge which he and his companions had scaled. He lay calmly as if in a pleasant trance, his blue eyes gazing upward in death, and his lips parted as with a smile. He was laid tenderly in a soldier's red-stained grave, where he rests in a hero's last slumber. He had given his love to a heartless one, and his affections were blighted. He gave his life to his country, and now wears a patriot's crown.



## AN EARLY-DAY TRIP---NO. 1.

EARLY in our fifteenth year we had succeeded in persuading our paternal parent to permit his prematurely ambitious son to "Go West." After obtaining his consent, we could not "wait a minute," but must be off at once—in the latter part of February. Accordingly, after packing into a capacious carpet-bag a very plain wardrobe, as well as several very "useful books"—including a Holy Bible, Pilgrims' Progress, etc.,—we gripped our weighty sack, bade adieu to parents, and our many brothers and sisters, clambered aboard the old stage coach, and waved a farewell to the old farm, the brook, and the hills and valleys of western Pennsylvania, and started on what to us was a literal "leap in the dark." That was in 1855. Railroads were not then so numerous nor so well regulated as now, and even a railroad trip to the far West was a journey, the thought of which was calculated to cause a shudder to run over full grown men, in the rural districts of old eastern communities. They never undertook the trip alone, and even when a venturesome trio started off, they were considered regular heroes by all their old neighbors and friends.

We started away fully resolved to reach the then new and little heard of country known as "Minnesota Territory;" and, with our twenty six dollars—more dollars than we had ever before seen congregated together—we felt sure we could get to Minnesota Territory, and have money enough left to buy considerable of the Territory, beside: but, as we afterward learned, this was a mistake.

We had never before been out of the county in which we were raised, had never seen a railroad, knew no more of the ways of the world than we did of the moon, and didn't know the difference between a city and a water-melon patch, or between a hotel and a haystack, as it were.

In due time we arrived at the town, thirty miles away, where the railroad was reached, and having arrived a couple of hours in advance of the train, we carried our weighty sack around the streets, or sat upon it near the wonderful railroad and contemplated the astonishing character of the iron road, and speculated greatly as to how the cars could "stick onto" such a thing, how they looked, etc. At last, we heard the roar of the approaching train, and as it grew louder and louder, and approached nearer—but was hidden from view by a sharp curve near the depot—our knees began to knock together with fear and excitement, and the bag was so heavy that we could scarcely lift it. In a moment the locomotive came roaring and plunging around the curve into plain sight, and very near, and we felt exceedingly like an orphan without friends, as we contemplated for the first time a train of cars; and when the engine came up and blew a terrible blast on the first steam whistle we ever heard, we felt pretty sure the whole thing, including the train, the depot, the railroad the people, ourself and in all probability the whole world had been exploded, and were going to eternal slam-bang. After running clear around the depot, clinging to our only treasure, however, we saw that the people didn't seem to think there was anything particularly wrong, and so we calmed down a little—though we really wished ourself at home, where things were run with less clash and thunder.

After figuring out where the proper entrance to the car was, we made a bold push, and soon were ensconced in a corner-seat, with our grip-sack carefully guarded between our feet; our greatest fear was that some of our books might be stolen, and particularly, that our Bible or Pilgrims' Progress might in some mysterious way, go astray on us; hence, we were either hanging onto our 'grip' or else sitting on it, all the time.

Soon the cars started, and were shooting along at a fearful rate of speed, and we felt sure we must be dashed to pieces: the

trees, fences and all objects flew past as if shot out of a gun, and all we could do at times was to shut our eyes, hold tightly to our treasure, and mentally repeat, "Good Lord, have mercy on us."

A man soon came along and demanded our money, and we gave it to him; he said it would be five dollars to Mansfield, and that was as far as he could ticket us; he said the train arrived at Mansfield about midnight, and that we could be ticketed from there to Toledo, but would have to stay over at Mansfield until the next evening, when we could go forward.

At Mansfield the hackmen got hold of us, and it was a fight for life, among them to keep from going crazy, and maintain possession of our carpet-bag: after ourself and our bag had been pulled and hauled around among about twenty shouting hotel villains, one burly fellow picked both ourself and our treasure up bodily and chucked us into his hack, locked the door, and drove off. We were now terribly frightened, and fully believed we had been kidnapped and were being driven off to some cave where we would be robbed of our books and clothing, as well as our money, and then murdered. We rehearsed with great rapidity, over and over again, all the prayers we knew, and would gladly have contributed liberally for the foreign missions if there had been anyone to pass the hat: we did everything that seemed good, as we were jostled around the dark hack in which we were imprisoned.

After a time, to our great relief the conveyance stopped in front of a well-lighted 'tavern,' and the driver opened the door, and after telling us to give him twenty-five cents, told us that was his tavern and to go in and stay all night. We went in and hesitatingly took a seat in a shaded corner on our carpetbag after feeling it over to find out if any of our books had been stolen in the scrimmage, or our treasure had been otherwise damaged. We took a general survey of the place, and felt sure we must have been ushered into a king's palace, so grand did every thing look. Pretty soon a young man, with a beautiful moustache, and gold shirt buttons came to us and asked who and what we were. We frankly told him our whole story, when he laughed heartily, as he remarked: "I guess you have never traveled much, young man?" We told him we had traveled a good deal within the last twenty-four hours: that if we traveled many more



days like we had the last day we should be worn out, or torn to pieces. He said it would cost us two dollars to stay at the hotel until the Toledo train went out the next evening, and that he would show us our room where we could go to bed. We thought that was a tremendous amount of money for the privilege offered, but not knowing what else to do, we followed him to a room, and went to bed. We did not retire, however, until we had taken an account of stock in our grip-sack, to see that our books and other property were all right, and counted over our money, which we found had shrunk at a fearful rate; but, having no adequate conception of the great distance to be traveled, nor the thousand and one additional demands that would be made upon us, we did not fear but that we had even yet sufficient wealth to get us through to St. Paul.

Daylight found us out of bed, and after taking a careful invoice of stock again we went down stairs, and the landlord—noticing that we were a clear case of “buckwheat”—kindly proposed that he would take care of our baggage until the train started, and relieve us from its constant care; he promised to put it under lock and key for us, and so we took the chances, and after breakfast started out through the town to see the sights.

After wandering around for an hour or so, reading the wonderful signs, and beholding, with mouth agape, all the wonderful things in the store and shop windows, we came to a place where a man had an immense “whirligig,” from the long arms of which were suspended wooden horses, carriage-seats, etc., upon which one could ride, so many times round, for ten cents, and could ride astride of one of the horses or in a carriage-seat, as he chose. A large crowd of idle men and cheering street boys were present, and whenever the owner got his horses and seats full, he would start his machine and away would go the whole twenty cheering, yelling riders, until a hundred rounds had been passed, when the thing would pull up and a fresh load be taken aboard, or the same riders would go again by repeating the ten-cent part of the program.

Of course, this just beat anything we had ever heard of, and it did not take long to convince us that ten cents would be well invested in a hundred trips around this sweeping swing, and one

of the beautiful wooden horses was our choice, by a large majority.

We climbed onto a dapple-grey horse, paid our dime, and soon all the seats were full and the swing started; we had forgotten that even a ride in a common swing made us deathly sick—much less, one of these flying circular contrivances—and before we remembered this, and discovered that we were on a machine which was ten-fold more “sickening” than a common swing, it was going so fast that to jump off would have been death or broken limbs, and we soon discovered to our horror that we were in for what would probably prove a ride of ruin, so far as we were concerned. We tried to yell to the proprietor to stop and let us off, but the din and clatter drowned our voice; we swung our hat at him, and motioned with our legs, in the most desperate manner, but all to no purpose, and we resigned ourselves to our fate, and devoted our fast “failing health” to the task of hanging on to our dapple-grey horse. Very soon the horses, and the whole world was whirling like a buz-wheel, and we could scarcely hold to our wooden horse: pretty soon we leaned forward and hung on with both hands locked about our horse’s neck, whilst groans of agony were sent out, as our contribution to the general jubilee, and the whole crowd sent up a howl of delight at the sight of our grief. We have read of the agonies of seasickness, and how landlubbers fairly threw up their boots over the bulwarks, but we beg leave to assert that the worst case of seasickness recorded, either in history or out of it, was a season of perfect bliss compared with our ride on that whirligig: such retching and bodily contortions; such awful sensations, as we went round and round, wanting to die and yet clinging to our horse for fear we should fall off and be dashed in pieces. But everything has an ending, and that ten cent ride also ended after what seemed an age of agony, and we rolled off and lay limp as a rag on the ground—our hat gone, our jeans pants ripped, our hair all over our face which had grown, alternately, ashen and blue. We became unconscious, and after an hour we awoke and found ourselves in a grocery, with a doctor administering mild stimulants with a teaspoon. After a time the groceryman’s boy showed us the way to the hotel, where we were glad to find that our carpet-bag was safe, and for three

or four hours we lay on the bed, at the end of which time the world ceased whirling around, our nerves became settled, and a cup of tea and a piece of toast kindly sent us by the landlord, put our internal fixtures into a pacified and somewhat improved condition: so that at the hour of departure we were enabled to take full command of our grip-sack once more. The landlord in his generosity, said he guessed we had had a rough enough experience in Mansfield, and did not charge us anything for our stay. From that day to this we cannot think of one of those machines without feeling sick at the stomach, and to see one in motion actually throws us into a spasm, to this day.

After stammering out our thanks to the kind host, we found the depot after a deal of inquiry along the streets, found the place to buy a ticket to Toledo, and got aboard the right car, after boarding two or three wrong ones, and came near being run over by a switch-engine. After getting ourself and our baggage safely stowed away in a corner, we looked over our money, and found we had fourteen dollars and sixty cents of a balance on hand; but, thinking Toledo couldn't be *very* far from St. Paul, we consoled ourself, and during the night that followed we curled down on top of our "grip," and wore away the weary night by snoozing and dreaming of riding on that whirligig, and morning found us shrunken in frame, troubled in spirit and haggard in appearance.

We arrived in Toledo in a cold, drizzling rain, and succeeded in escaping the hackmen, with our property, after having been nearly pulled in two, and started up through the dreary, muddy town, looking cautiously along for some one with a benevolent face of whom we could inquire when and where we could start for Chicago. Our load seemed very heavy, and it was with difficulty we could carry it. Finally an old peanut man showed us the steam-ferry upon which we should have to cross the harbor to the Chicago depot. By watching the big folks after crossing the harbor on the boat, and by a good deal of inquiry, we finally found ourself aboard the Chicago-bound train, with but five dollars and thirty-five cents left. So intense had been our concern, that it was not until noon that we remembered not having anything to eat, except the toast and tea, since the morning pre-

vious; and at Michigan City we went into a coffee-house near the depot and ate twenty cents worth of bread and coffee, and bought five cents' worth of peanuts.

Near midnight we landed in Chicago, amid a howling mob of hotel-runners, rain, mud and snow, with no more idea where we were—aside from the name—than if dropped into another world. By an inquiry we had made on the cars, we learned the fare from Chicago to Galena was just five dollars—Galena was the most northerly point on the Mississippi River then attainable by railroad.

After asking many questions, and receiving many a heartless rebuff, and derisive reply, we finally, by almost superhuman exertion, in packing our load, found a hotel, nearly a mile from the depot, where we timidly entered, and seated ourself on our carpet-sack in the shade of one of the great pillars in the palatial office of the large, brilliant hotel—one of the best and largest in the city. We were exceedingly weary, and by this time had fully concluded that our money must run out long ere reaching our destination, and this fact began to weigh heavily upon our spirits; we were not only ashamed to beg, but were afraid to let our destitute condition be known—imagining that our plight was the first and only similar misfortune that had ever befallen any one; we shrank from the thought of making it known, and fully determined to go until the last penny was expended, and then trust to Providence for the balance.

It was not long after entering the hotel before all the guests had retired, and we were discovered by the man on duty in the place, who approached us and in a gruff voice demanded:

"Here you young rooster, what are you doing here—you'd better carry yourself out of here in less'n a flyin' minute!"

We seized our satchel, and with a terrible sense of guilt, or something of a similar feeling, we made for the doorway as fast as possible; but, turning and giving the man a frightened look, he seemed to relent, and in a milder tone called out:

"I say, boy, hold on a minute." We stopped on the threshold, when he continued: "Come back here and tell me what you are doing around here, anyway."

We hesitatingly sank into a chair near where he was standing,

and in answer to his questions told him who we were, and whither we were bound. Apparently being convinced of our honesty, he said we could occupy a chair until morning, and told us when the Galena train started out—at eight o'clock—and gave us a general idea of the direction of the depot, though he said it was nearly two miles distant. Thanking him for his kindness, we “snuggled down” into the big chair, with our sack on our knees, and enjoyed an uneasy kind of sleep until daylight, when we shouldered our more weighty than valuable property and started out to find the depot.

By dint of great labor, we found it barely in time, and our general appearance was much the same as when we got through with our ride at Mansfield. In our rambles in search of the Galena depot we had passed through the hands of a couple of burly newsboys, who seemed to feel it their religious duty to give us a complete wallop; our concern was not so great for ourself as for our glazed carpet-sack, which we had saved only by great bravery induced by desperation: the poor grip-sack was worse used up than ourself when we reached the depot, having one side kicked in, our precious books badly jammed, and one of the handles of the sack torn off. At the depot we paid all our money for a ticket to Galena excepting ten cents, and left Chicago with many a heart-ache as to what was liable to happen next, for our special edification, with a dozen sore spots contributed by the newsboys, and a very poor idea of Chicago hospitality in general. During the day we got out our needle and thread and, so far as possible, made *a-mends* in our wardrobe and reconstructed our poor dilapidated baggage.

We had nearly all day to reflect upon how we were “getting on in the world,” and finally convinced ourself that during the three days we had been “a traveler in strange lands,” we had learned more than in all the rest of our life—in fact we *felt* that we had. We also learned by overhearing others talk, that the upper Mississippi River was yet closed by ice, and would be for several weeks to come; that Galena was a miserable town in which to remain until navigation opened; that Dubuque was a much finer city in which to sojourn, but that the only way just at that season, to get from Galena to Dubuque was to traverse a

wild region of country a distance of eighteen miles, to Dunleith, and there cross the river to Dubuque on the Iowa side, on the steam ferry, which would cost ten cents. We had just that amount of money left, but how were we ever to reach Dunleith? Already two days with scarcely anything to eat, and another day and night lying between, with our sacred property, weighing some twenty-five pounds, and with which we would no sooner think of parting than of losing our right hand—especially with our “good books.” And, right here, we propose to relate one of the most noteworthy cases of physical endurance we ever heard of, before or since.

We can scarcely, even to this day, explain what it was that kept us from at least *asking* for something to eat; but, we had, in our “greenhorn” innocence, become impressed with the idea that all humanity had turned enemies to us; retiring and modest at that age—since outgrown, however—to the greatest possible degree, and withal possessed with a self-pride and a self-respect which formed an insurmountable barrier to our begging, even had we not considered it positively dangerous to ask for anything without paying all that was required; and of course, our early training had been of the kind that taught us that it was far better to die than to take even the most trifling thing without the knowledge of its owner. Thus, amid a most terrible condition of the roads and the worst possible winter weather, we arrived at Galena some time after dark of a black and terribly stormy night, and, by following in the wake of the crowd—for more than a mile, from the end of the unfinished railroad into the town—through mud and snow knee deep, we at last found ourself in the office of the principal hotel in the place, completely wet, bedaubed in mud, and weary and faint in the extreme.

Here we met with some, to us, decidedly new *features* in our eventful journey. The hotel was literally jammed full of travelers, adventurers, and all sorts of men, and among the rest twenty Winnebago Indian chiefs, who had reached there the day before on their return from Washington, whither they had been on a treaty tour. We had never seen an Indian before, and when we suddenly found ourself in the midst of a great crowd of these stalwart, painted, feather-bedecked and blanketed warriors, with

knives, tomahawks and war-clubs lashed to them, we certainly felt that life with us was to be only a brief season of human and scalped misery. But, although in continual fear of them all of that, to us, most dreadful night—for we were thoroughly read up in Indian massacres and other atrocities—we finally concluded that by keeping in a shady corner, and conducting ourself with the greatest possible decorum, we might be spared, for we noticed that the white guests were very familiar with them, and the Indians seemed to be in a pleasant mood.

Supper-time came, and the guests were summoned by a fellow beating frantically on a terrible gong; we had never before heard one of these tumultuous carnage-dispensers, and it just about frightened what little life we yet possessed, clear out of us. Of course, we were only too glad to be allowed to remain inside, without daring to even look into the room where the steaming viands sent out their luscious odors, to only aggravate our starving sensations.

It was late when all the guests had retired, and the savages spread their blankets about on the office floor, all around us, and alternately slept, talked in their singular tongue, or smoked their pipes, until the room was filled with smoke. There we sat, finally, all alone with these armed red skins, afraid to even move, and watching their every movement through all that weary and painful night.

Morning eventually arrived, after a seeming age, and such a morning! It had snowed nearly a foot, on top of the almost bottomless mud, and was dark and murky overhead. Breakfast was announced, the guests all responded gayly to the call of the gong, after having their morning dram at the bar, and we almost, at one time, made up our mind to ask the clerk for something to eat; but our heart failed us and we did not do it. We could see that the town was a repulsive looking place, and as we had heard a dozen or more of the men agree to undertake the trip through to Dubuque on foot, despite the horrible condition of the roads, we resolved to follow in their wake, though we had also heard them describe the route as lying through a barren, wild and desolate country.

After breakfast they fixed themselves completely for the trip:

long boots, unincumbered by luggage to speak of, they filled their flasks with stimulants, their cases with cigars, and finally all started in high spirits through the mud and snow, with the writer at a respectful distance in the rear, with our carpet-bag an a short stick across our shoulder.

We had no more than entered the barrens in rear of the town when we began to realize that our undertaking was a most desperate one, with such a load, and in our condition, but still something seemed to impel us forward through the mud and snow, nearly knee deep. We seemed to feel that if we could only reach Dubuque, it would be vastly better, because it would be just so much further on our journey, and could not but prove a more desirable place than Galena in which to seek employment.

For a distance of three or four miles we kept close to the well-fed travelers, though none of them deigned to notice us, save to occasionally turn about and, with a laugh, yell out, "Hurry up, Bub, or the wolves will make a dinner of you, sure!" and "jolly remarks" of a similar character. After a time we began to fall to the rear, and finally in spite of our efforts to keep up, they passed out of sight entirely. We shall not attempt to fully portray our experiences during the remainder of that day, for such experiences are beyond the power of pen or pencil. With nothing to eat for nearly three days, save the little lunch two days previously, we now found ourself in the midst of a wilderness, alone, starving, and weighed down with a load too great for even a strong man to carry over such roads. After traveling until nearly noon, as we imagined, we fell exhausted in the snow, and lay almost unconscious for a time, when we aroused again, and struggled on, with only a desperate resolution as our last support. We knew, every time we fell, which grew more and more frequent as the day wore on, that if we lay until our joints became stiffened and set—and they seemed, finally, to be growing solidly together—that we should perish through sheer helplessness, or speedily be devoured by the wolves which were abundant then in that wild region. So, with all the horrors of our situation pictured before our eyes, we would scarcely more than fall to the ground ere we would begin the struggle to get up again. Our feelings can neither be conceived or described: and our ghastly



and crazed appearance must have corresponded well with our awful physical sensations.

We must have been a picture of insane distress when, just before dark, we reached the wharf at Dunleith, and staggered aboard the steam ferry, that was just pulling out for her last trip across the great river for the day. In a moment after starting, and as we stood leaning against the rail, the collector came around and we gave him our last dime, and then staggered along into the low cabin, dropped our sack on the floor, fell prone upon a long bench, and all consciousness was suddenly blotted out.

Up to this time our trip had certainly been an eventful one, and one in which human endurance had been tested to the quick. But fourteen years of age, and small for our age; two days and a half and two nights without even a morsel of food of any kind, and scarcely any sleep, and on the last day made a march with a load, and through a country, and over a road that would have been very trying to even a strong and well-fed man. We have always considered that trip a thorough proportionate test of what a human being can endure, under the most desperate circumstances, and still remain on the earthly side of the dark valley.

When we first realized where we were, after passing into unconsciousness on the steamer, we found we had been carried to the City Hotel, in Dubuque, by direction of some kind-hearted gentleman who saw us fall. Lying on a sofa in a beautifully-furnished apartment, with a waiter and physician seated near us, apparently watching with deep interest the result of the trial, the particulars of which they as yet knew nothing. The first thing we remember to have spoken was an inquiry concerning our precious grip-sack, and the waiter assured us it was safe in the office of the hotel—oh, that precious property! It was near morning, and the doctor, after seeing us safely revived, left medicine to be given us, and said he would call again during the day. We could not move even a muscle, much less a limb, and it was almost a week before we could walk about—in the meantime having suffered greatly.

The landlord—whose name we have forgotten—had inquired into our history, and assured us that we should be taken care of until the upper river opened, and then he would see that some

way was provided for our reaching St. Paul; and when we were able, he said he had some light duties about the hotel which we could do for him. It is needless to say that as soon as possible, we proved a faithful servant to our kind and generous benefactor.

After two or three weeks we again took sick, and for some time the balance between life and death quivered dubiously; our wiry constitution, however, finally triumphed, and we again became convalescent. This was the spring when the cholera broke out all along the river with such terrible fatality, and every steamer that came from below was loaded with death in its most horrible form.

The landlord finally told us one morning that if we were bent upon going through to St. Paul, the steamboat "Hamburg" would be in some time during the day and her old master, Captain Estes, being a warm personal friend of his, he would introduce us to him, and request him to set us down in St. Paul as safe and sound as circumstances would permit, which he felt sure he would do.

Accordingly, when the Hamburg arrived our noble friend consigned us and our grip-sack to the care of Captain Estes and, with real feeling, asked him to look after our welfare, which the bluff, kind-hearted old skipper most heartily promised to do—the grand old steamer Hamburg "sleeps" at this day at the bottom of Lake Pepin, near the Minnesota shore, and not far above the legendary and famous Maiden's Leap; where the bones of old Captain Estes now rest we know not, but we heartily pray that "he sleeps well," wherever may be his tomb.

Though other steamers which had come from below were freighted with death, the Hamburg could certainly claim the palm in that matter, and our slow trip up the river was a veritable journey of death. At every landing, a greater or less number of dead were put ashore from among the four or five hundred passengers, and at every woodpile corpses were hastily interred in shallow and unmarked graves by the deck-hands. At the then young town of La Crosse, we painfully remember, there were seven brothers and sisters laid side by side, on the wharf, with their dead mother, and when the boat pulled away we beheld—the last object we saw beneath the weird light of the boat's

flickering torches—the frantic father and husband, the only survivor, wailing over his “loved ones gone,” through the horrors of cholera, to another land from the one they had started for, with such hopes and promise for the future.

Captain Estes was indeed very, very kind; his solicitude for our safety and care was all that the fondest father could have bestowed, and although we drifted speedily into the first stages of the dreadful disease that was constantly claiming new victims by the score, he, with his great experience, doctored us and watched our condition so closely, that he battled away the disease, so that when we reached St. Paul, though but a respectable skeleton, we had safely passed the point of danger, and afterward regained our wonted health and vigor, through the influence of the grand and salubrious climate of Minnesota.





## AN EARLY-DAY TRIP---NO. 2.

AFTER spending a year and a half among the Indians and early-day flatboatmen of the Minnesota River Valley—also called in those days, St. Peter River—our conscience began to prick us, because we had left the hearthstone of our parents at so young an age, and felt that we had only remained at home until we had barely ceased to be a charge, and ought to have remained a few years longer and endeavored to work out a “bill for our early keeping,” that in the light of reason, as we began to view it, stood recorded against us. We felt, in fact, as though we had not acted fairly by our kind parents, who had devoted the best days of their lives to our care and training, and we resolved to lose no time in returning to the humble homestead of our father and tender him our services. We probably would never have thought of this sin of omission of which we stood self-charged, but for the fact that we had grown extremely homesick, and longed for the familiar scenes of our childhood. This fact, we have no doubt, had a big influence in bringing us to a sense of duty, and quickening within us the spark of filial affection.

During the year and a half spent in the wilds of Minnesota, we had learned but little of the ways of the world, save what could be gleaned in the cook-house of a Minnesota River flatboat, whilst serving up pork, beans, tea, and gray-colored biscuit for a crew of Frenchmen, who talked all the time night and day, but who never spoke English excepting when they desired us to understand that it was time for us to draw a bucketful of whiskey from a barrel of the Government supplies—in those days most of

the freight boated up the river consisted of government goods for the frontier military posts and Indian agencies—and turn in a bucketful of river water to make whole the contents of the barrel. Still, being of a somewhat observing turn of mind, we learned some things, while others were forced upon our mind, regardless of any natural disposition on our part to gather in “points.” We learned all about how flatboating was done on a difficult river in a new and untamed and unsettled country, particularly the mysteries of furnishing the most wretched victuals from the raw material—the position of chief caterer being the only degree in the art of flatboating that our years or muscle would at that time permit us to become a recognized master in. It was a most charming spectacle to see the magnificent soups we dished up for the French crew, by boiling a ten pound chunk of fat salt-pork all afternoon in a sheet-iron kettle, and served up in tin dishes. There would be about three or four inches of clear grease to be eaten off before they reached the pure brine below. But they always complimented our pork-soup, or *bouillon*, as being extremely fine; aside from the *oil*, it would be so salty that a single mouthful of it would have turned the stomach of Lot’s wife inside out, even though she had become solid on the salt question. But we cannot now go into the details of a flatboatman’s life on frontier waters, because it would require the latitude of a small volume to do justice to the life and experiences of a jolly flatboatman in those early days, on the murky bosom of the mosquito-bound and Indian-hampered shores of the Minnesota River.

Late in the autumn of 1856, found us a passenger on a down-river steamer, with a wardrobe which was a cross between that worn by a river-rat, and an average Indian boy, with a hollow-sided grip-sack—our precious books had some time before succumbed to various influences, including wind and weather—with some seventy or eighty dollars in our breeches pocket, as the net proceeds of eighteen months on the ragged edge of civilization.

As the Christmas snow was falling in great soft flakes, only to melt on the wet and muddy earth, a lone juvenile might have been seen, in the uncertain light of late evening, approaching his childhood’s humble home, guided by familiar spots, toward the

cheerful light that glowed from the window out upon the beautiful night scene. This home was the paternal headquarters so much longed for, and we the juvenile prodigal returned from distant wanderings in a strange country. Our unlooked for entrance to the family circle, created a convulsion of all the family elements, which jarred the hearthstone from center to circumference.

The following morning we "explained our position," and tried to make our parents understand how much we had suffered in mind at having left them at so premature an age, and without even offering our services on the farm, for six years or during our minority; but they did not seem to realize that they had sustained any very serious loss; or if they had, the loss, either past or prospectively, had not broken in upon their minds with any very great shock, as yet. The old gentleman suggested that we attend school during the winter, at the log school-house in the hollow, and in the spring we should be at liberty to continue our observations on the borders of the Far West, so far as he was concerned. But, indeed, by the time spring had arrived, we needed no admonition to again set our face toward the Land of the Dakotahs. If our longing to return home was severe, our anguish to get started West again was infinitely more severe, and all we learned that winter at the log school-house was to forget a good deal of what we knew before—as we stared vacantly, our eyes on the enchanting pages of a Cobb's spelling-book, and our mind away in the great, free Northwest, amid the fascinating scenes of the wild life with which we had been surrounded in the time of our absence.

Springtime came at last, and, accompanied by a great stalwart production of those rural haunts, much older than ourself, named Jake S——, we again, and for the last time, turned our back upon the rocky glens and mossy hillsides of our native hether.

Of course we claimed, and Jake cheerfully conceded us, the honor of being "master of ceremonies" in the travels that lay before us, and we resolved on this trip, to travel wholly by river, taking passage at Pittsburgh. By this time we flattered ourself that we knew a thing or two about travel, and the ways of the earth, although it was not many moons later that we found there were at least a few things we had not before discovered.

Jake was emphatically verdant in all things, and was just at that age when he was neither attractive nor convincing in his presence, and even when addressed, he could not possibly drawl out the simplest answer until his questioner had "long since" forgotten what it was he asked him. In short, both in appearance and manner, Jake was one of the worst specimens of turnip-sheller that ever emigrated from the Allegheny spurs.

Arriving at Pittsburgh in due time, we found a steamboat bound for St. Louis, and thereon we took passage, and were assigned to a stateroom located immediately forward of the larboard wheel. She was a large boat, and had in tow two immense barges loaded with railroad iron. She left port, too, crowded with passengers, mostly families and young men seeking homes and fortunes in the far west—most of them bound for Kansas. There were so many people on board, that the cabin, as well as the lower deck, was crowded uncomfortably, and, with her heavy tow of barges the boat made the passage down the Ohio and up the Mississippi to St. Louis a very slow and tedious one.

After buying our tickets, Jake and ourself had fifty dollars, between us, with which to pay our way from St. Louis to St. Paul. We had scarcely gotten out of sight of Pittsburgh ere one of the passengers fell overboard—literally crowded off the lower deck—and was drowned before he could be reached by the small boats; and, during the whole trip there were seven of the passengers dropped into the river, at different points, and lost. All this, with the prevalence of a good deal of sickness, resulting in several deaths, among the emigrants, made the "voyage" of about ten days to St. Louis one to be remembered, aside from the many other accidents that transpired, which were calculated to harrow up the souls, and try the bravery of two such precious greenhorns as Jake and ourself—particularly Jake.

Immediately after leaving Pittsburgh our traveling companion began to show signs of distress, and took to his bed largely. It only required a day or two to prove the cause of his indisposition. He had been taken down with the mumps! and he had, too, the "most complete set" of mumps we ever beheld. His face was naturally short and round, covered over with a straggling "stumpy" beard, and in a couple of days his face was about two

feet, horizontally, with a perpendicular elevation of about six inches. When Jake's jaws began to "spread," he felt better, somewhat, and spent some time out of his room—which, by the way, was a most uncomfortable place even for a well person. It was close, and the infernal carnage of the great wheel made one's hair stand; and it seemed as though we were liable to be crushed by it every moment; it was, no doubt, a room that had been respectfully dictated to the use of "greenhorns" ever since the day when the old hulk was launched, because no other class would, for a moment, consent to pay as much as those who occupied the finest quarters, and then try to live in such a cavernous bedlam as that narrow niche, directly against the damp and roaring wheel.

Jake's mumps grew to such immense proportions, that he could scarcely pass through the narrow door of his room, without turning his "complaint" edgewise; and, when he first made his *entree* among the passengers in the cabin, there was a commotion probably never equaled since the "confusion of tongues" at the building of the Tower of Babel. We cannot describe the utter grotesqueness of Jake's appearance; the swelling, aside from making his face, from right to left, a perfect terror to look upon, had extended all over his face, nearly closing his eyes, and turning his nose almost the "other end up," beside drawing his mouth until it seemed to reach nearly from one ear to the other; imagine, then, an extremely short neck, and you may be able to get a very faint idea of poor Jake's general appearance when he wore mumps.

The boyish pride of the writer was being perpetually wounded, because Jake could not think of being separated from us for scarcely a moment; and when Jake and ourself would enter the cabin, we became the center of universal attraction—though it was simply the *eyes* of all, that were attracted, whilst the general anatomy of the average passenger would fly from our approach as though we carried a small-pox hospital in every pocket. Unfeeling persons would laugh immoderately at Jake's appearance, and pass all sorts of remarks, even going so far as to suggest that it would be a mercy to drown him; and they would also inquire of the writer, in all apparent sincerity, if we were engaged in col-



lecting curiosities for Barnum. As often as the weather and circumstances would permit, we would bundle Jake up and get him on the upper deck, where, with the hot smokestacks on one side of him, and the blazing sun on the other, endeavor to thaw out his mumps and reduce the swelling. We are not positive as to whether our original remedy proved efficacious or not; but certain it was that he improved under our treatment rapidly, and by the time Cincinnati was reached we had gotten Jake's face pretty well shrunk up again. We had never enjoyed a run of mumps ourself, and although we expected to become a victim, we did not, nor have we ever had them since. But, ere we left the boat at St. Louis, Jake and ourself had the supreme satisfaction of noticing that from forty to fifty of our fellow-passengers, who had been our tormentors on the trip, were beginning to grow finely, around the jaws, and the sight of the pickles on the tables would set them all to groaning, and to heaping imprecations loud and deep upon the head of the "original baboon" who gave them the pains they were just beginning to enjoy.

The boat remained at Cincinnati all day, and Jake and ourself concluded to look the town over a little, and so started out. After walking up and down several of the principal streets—the writer, meantime, keeping in sight some general landmarks, that we might not lose our bearings—we took a notion to treat ourselves to a card of ginger-bread, some peanuts and an orange—the latter, neither one of us had ever tasted. But the smallest money we had, being a ten-dollar note, we determined to drop into the first bank we came to and have it exchanged for small bills. In a few minutes we came to a bank, and whilst Jake stood leaning up against the door-case, curiously gazing about the elegant apartment—Jake had never seen a bank before, save a sand-bank or a coal-bank—the writer put on an extreme business air, approached the cashier's counter, threw down our ten-dollar note, and asked him to give us some small bills for it. He took up the note, glanced his eye over it, held it up to the light, and then laid it down on the counter. He gave us a look that nearly froze our blood; then he looked at Jake, and that seemed to settle it. He took down a little whistle from behind his desk, sprang over the counter to the door, and blew it vigorously as he remarked,

"I guess this will prove a clue to some of this trouble; and in less than a minute, in rushed two men dressed in blue uniforms, with clubs in their belts and had both of us by the coat-collars in a jiffy.

"Now, officers," said the banker, "take these two young scoundrels to the lock-up, and as the court is now open, and I have the proof of their character here in my hand, I will be up in half an hour and have them examined before dinner."

So saying, the officers tightened their grip and literally "snatched" us out to the sidewalk, and started up the street with two as sorry-looking and terrorized young "buckwheats" as probably were ever seen in any city or country. The whole proceeding was so short and positive, and burst upon us so suddenly, that our tongues were tied by the apparent horror of our situation, and for a time both of us were utterly speechless. At last Jake, who was ahead, exploded; and, amid a flood of tears, he made out to screw his head around far enough to catch a glimpse of our own staring eyes and gaping mouth and remark:

"Boo-hoo-oo!—aw-aw! Oh, bwa-haw-oo-oo! Oh, what's the—baw-hoo-wah!—matter with us now?—wah-baw-hoo!"

About that time the officer gave him a twitch that not only cut off further communication, but lifted his heels up about as high as where his mumps were usually located. Taking Jake's rear elevation, as he was marched along up the street, as a starting point from which to judge character, and he really did look like a "hard ticket." The officer had a whole handful of his thin and somewhat slouchy checked coat gathered up into a handful, together with his shirt and "galuses," and when he yanked Jake around to stop his blubbering, it seemed to draw his coat-tail and shirt up toward his collar, and the strain upon his yarn suspenders drew his pant-legs clear above his boots. As for ourself, we were no less frightened than our agonized companion; but had we been on our way to the gallows, we could not have suppressed, inward laugh, at the utterly ludicrous sight Jake presented as he passed along on his way to the police station.

Reaching the station, the officers put us into a small room, that seemed to be the wood-room of the establishment, and after searching us for "tools" or weapons, they went out, locking the

door after them. We never can forget the hour we spent in that room, consulting upon the situation. The writer believed the cause of our trouble was that the bill we gave to the banker was a counterfeit, and we had been arrested as counterfeiters, or something of that sort. But Jake was sure that could not be the cause of such a terrible state of affairs, and as the tears coursed down over his yet "healthy-looking" cheeks, and he, anon, wiped off the surplus "brine" with his sleeve, he felt dead certain that we were going to be hung or banished, or sent to the state prison for life, and starved to death on bread and water. While we ourself were also in a delightful state of uncertainty as to the fate that awaited us, yet we tried to cheer Jake up as much as we could. To add to our misery, we feared that we would not be given an opportunity to establish our innocence until the boat would go off and leave us, which would prove a ruin next to being executed or sent to the penitentiary.

At the end of an hour, or less, one of the officers came in and told us to follow him. Our limbs grew so weak with excitement and fear, that it was with the greatest difficulty we could ascend the stairs that led to the apartment of justice. Jake's knees fairly smote each other as we came in before the justice, where were assembled a motley group, only differing in the various kinds of "tough nuts" that seemed to fill the place. The banker was inside the bar, and a group of legal men were engaged in writing out documents. Jake and ourself were given seats inside the railing, and the judge asked the banker what charges he had to present against the two prisoners. At the word "prisoners," Jake looked up at his illustrious partner in crime—the boss traveler—and such a look! It was a look of despair which no brush could have transferred to canvas, or mortal words express. As for ourself, we felt that no drop of blood coursed its way in our veins, although as the crisis came, we felt the calm of desperation coming over us, for we knew that if we were ever to get out of that trouble, *we* should certainly have to accomplish it, as we could plainly see that Jake was completely dumbfounded.

The banker arose, holding the fatal bank-note in his hand, and informed the judge of the circumstances by which it came into his possession. He said it was an "altered bill," or "raised bill,"

which meant that it was originally a *one-dollar bill*. That there was a gang of men, somewhere, who were flooding the country with this altered or raised money, and that the bankers and business men of Cincinnati had been severely swindled by this money, some of which was most cleverly executed. He added that the bankers had resolved to ferret out this gang of swindlers, if possible, and bring them to justice; that he felt sure these two young sprigs might be made to divulge something that would further the ends of justice in this matter; at any rate he considered the manner and circumstances of the tender of this money at his bank sufficiently suspicious to warrant him in causing their arrest—pointing to Jake and ourself—for they were just such verdant appearing, uncouth chaps as these who would be used as feelers for the main gang.

After he concluded his remarks, the judge, turning to the writer, said: "Well, young man, what have you to offer in defense of your act in presenting such money as this at the bank?"

We staggered to our feet, holding to the railing, lest our knee-joints should fail entirely—for a court of justice was certainly new to us in its surroundings and affairs, and had it not been a most desperate case we should never have been able to offer any defense at all. But, being conscious of our own innocence, when we arose to speak a feeling of indignation came to our assistance, and we began at the first of our trip and related a straightforward history of who we were, where we were going, where we received the money and all about it—even to the misfortune of our friend Jake in being taken down with the mumps, which fact we offered in extenuation of his present not overly honest-looking face—there being yet an undue proportion of "cheek" in his general make-up. The money, we had received from a country schoolmaster, before leaving home. After hearing our story, the judge turned to an officer and said:

"Take this note, officer, and accompany these two lads to the boat, at the levee, upon which they claim to be passengers, and if you find their statements true in that particular, and there are no new suspicions forced upon your mind, return the bill to them and let them go on their way rejoicing."

At this, we both followed the officer, our hearts several tons

lighter than when we entered the building, and soon arrived at the boat, where preparations were being made to continue the journey. The officer went with us to the clerk of the boat, who certified to our character as passengers—particularly to Jake as being a well known passenger on the boat—when the officer gave us our “raised bill” and went on shore. The lines were hauled in and we were soon afloat once more. In an interview on the upper deck, shortly after, Jake and ourself voted unanimously in favor of a proposition to the effect that we had learned several entirely new things that day, and that we had seen all of Cincinnati that we cared to—at least until sometime when we didn’t have so much spurious currency about us as we seemed to have that day.

No troubles overtook us, worthy of mention, before reaching St. Louis, after the slice of education we had enjoyed at Cincinnati. An incident, however, occurred not far from Cairo, which, while it lasted, was somewhat exciting. It was somewhere near the middle of the night, and all of the several hundred passengers on board were soundly sleeping—or nearly all. The rooms, of course, were all full, and in addition, the cabin floor from one end to the other, was covered with cots or “shake-downs” to accommodate the passengers who were not fortunate enough to secure staterooms. During the night, if one found it necessary to pass through the cabin, great caution had to be used in making a way among the slumberers strewn about.

Suddenly, as if the boat had crashed into a perpendicular ledge of rocks, came a crashing and smashing; a snapping of timbers; a rolling and pitching; and in less time than it takes to relate it the terrified passengers came screaming and tumbling out of their rooms, *in dishabille*,—men, women and children. Many from the upper bunks came, like leaping frogs, through the transoms, landing in the utter mob in the cabin, heels-over-head; while more than one muscular two-hundred-pounder never stopped to unlock his door, but came crashing through the thin bulkheads, carrying all before them, and adding kindling wood to the general mix-up; the boat rolled and groaned from stem to stern. The writer had the good fortune to be so stupified with terror, that we simply gained the transom and had crawled about half way

through, when we could only hang over the cross-piece above the door and look down upon the confusion that prevailed from one end of the great cabin to the other. One-third of the mass of human beings seemed to be under foot, while the balance surged up and down, shouting and howling—the women screaming, the children wailing and the men cursing. At last the captain and clerk gained an elevated position in the forward end of the cabin, and the former being a very large man, with a voice like seven thunders, after a time succeeded in attracting the attention of the mob, and with more power than elegance of language, said the danger was past, and that the boat was all safe; that if they didn't stop their infernal noise and settle down, he would shoot a hundred or two of the leaders of the confusion, etc. After a few minutes spent in well directed assurances and threats, the people were finally sufficiently pacified to permit the captain to explain the cause of the disaster and its extent. He said the larboard barge had struck a rock, and had been torn into a thousand pieces, she and her cargo of iron going to the bottom in less time than you could say "Jack Robinson," with your mouth wide open to begin with; that although the barge was, of necessity, attached the steamer by immense hawsers and a cable chain, yet the latter had withstood the shock with but little damage he thought, as the hawsers and chains had parted or torn their fastenings instead of injuring the hull materially; and the steamer had been saved from capsizing or being thrown athwart the ledge by the iron laden barge on her starboard side, which held her straight and comparatively steady. He added that the carpenter and a crew of men were already in the hold, fully prepared to head off any leaks that might have been sprung by the shock, and that he wanted them to settle down and cease making a pack of infernal fools of themselves; enough people had already been hurt, and enough damage been done; he could get them ashore in any event, etc.

After this explanation, the mob cooled down, and began to see themselves as others saw them—and they commenced a grand scramble for their clothing, whilst many of the more humane and considerate turned their attention to those who had been injured in the terrible scene just enacted.

As good fortune willed it, there were none killed, although several had limbs fractured or sprained, and many were severely bruised; one little boy had his ear nearly torn off by being thrown against a broken door-knob, as was supposed. Poor Jake, it seems, had gained the cabin, and joined in with the general melee and when we next discovered him he was sitting in the pantry, half buried in broken dishes, and his mumps terribly scored up and distorted, although he received no serious injury, and we soon had him dug out from among the shattered crockery and again in his stateroom, where he bathed his wounds and regulated his mumps again as thoroughly as circumstances, with our assistance, admitted. About the first well-regulated sentence that Jake succeeded in digging up from his inner man was to the effect that he wished himself at home; that if his mother knew how things were going with him, he was afraid it would kill her. But we tried to comfort him by assuring him that his mother was not, in all probability, aware of the eventful life her dutiful son was leading, and beside we told him that his trip so far was only about an average traveler's experience; that he might expect an "endless string" of such fun till he once more saw his mother, if, indeed, he ever saw her again. Then Jake boo-hoo-awd a little, and said he was a dod-rotted fool for leaving home, anyway.

The boat was found, upon examination, to be considerably injured; although, aside from several leaks being sprung, which were speedily repaired temporarily, the injuries were above the water-line—along her guards and lower deck.

We finally, and without further mishap, reached St. Louis, where the great load of passengers, who had become pretty well acquainted with one another, separated. The greater portion of them sought Missouri River steamers, while others—Jake and ourself among the rest—found and took passage on boats for the upper Mississippi. The furthest point up the river to which tickets could be purchased at St. Louis, was to Muscatine, Iowa; and to this point we bought and paid for our tickets, leaving some twenty-five dollars of a cash capital remaining in the several pockets of Jake and ourself, combined.

The boat did not leave for about twelve hours after we had taken passage, and so, not being wholly intimidated by our Cincinnati

experience, we determined to look around the great city just a little. It was not long until we came to where there was a little "show," which the crier asserted was "the greatest panorama of nineteenth century—or *any other century!*" Neither Jake or ourself was very clear as to what a panorama was, but we determined, after a little council together, that if the biggest thing of the nineteenth century could be seen for fifteen cents, the very best thing we could do was to make the investment. We entered the place and were directed to put our eye up to each of a row of little peep-holes, which would enable us to "see it." By peeping in, we found that the little glass through which we looked was a sort of magnifier, and increased in size and beauty—and there was a big chance for an increase in the latter—the common, and highly-colored pictures exposed behind the screen. They were just such ten-cent pictures—of battles, of Generals Scott, Taylor, Worth and Ringgold, Captain May and his cavalry, Daniel Boone and his boss coon, and so on—as could be found in any of the backwoods shanties on the frontier, or in the mountain regions of our own native State. Still, Jake allowed that "they was a heap sight purtier, 'cause they was bigger, and looked sort uv sleeker through them little glasses," and he became very much absorbed in "the superabundant magnificence of their unprecedented grandeur," or words to that effect. There was a sort of mixed crowd about the place, jamming and jostling to ond fro, and after Jake had been around and seen all the "picturs," we left, and started leisurely along in the direction of the steamboat landing.

Just before we reached the wharf, however, Jake stopped suddenly, and grasped his vest pocket with both his hands. He staggered up against an unlatched gate, and fell into the yard, as the gate gave way. "Jake!" we fairly gasped in our terror at his unaccountable conduct, "what in the con-darn'd nation is the matter with you—I say, Jake, what *has* come over you so quick, anyway? speak, Jake, are you sick?" But Jake only groaned, and was more than ordinarily speechless, and we thought he was dying; or else, that his "nearly well mumps" had taken a sudden relapse, and we glanced up and down the street to see if we could discover a doctor's sign. Jake sat up, and gazed at us with a



wild, yet vacant, stare, as he at last feebly uttered: "My watch—oh my pappy's nice watch has gone!" That explained the seat of poor Jake's disease. His pocket had been picked in "the greatest panorama of the nineteenth century—or any other century," and at that moment some watch fiend had poor Jake's old fifteen-cent "bull's-eye," that had constituted the munificent gift from Jake's father to his adventurous son. To be sure, the old rattle-box was worn thin as a wafer, the case was dented up like a teething-spoon, there was only one hand that clicked around over the broken face, there were but three wheels and a "dog" inside, and when it went at all it would either knock off an hour every fifteen minutes, or wouldn't go at all; but all these characteristics and eccentricities had no kind of influence in the way of persuading Jake that his "pap's nice watch" wasn't worth a thousand dollars in clean dust; although we assured him that we could go right up town and find places where we could buy better watches, than his pap's old wreck, for fifty cents a bushel, and if we grumbled about the measure they would throw in two or three scoop-shovels full, still he remained uncomfortable; and so, he entered the first of a series of agonies which must have aggregated about a thousand dollars in value, ere he could think of becoming reconciled to far the greatest loss of his life, up to date.

After awhile, however, we succeeded in comforting Jake sufficiently to get him up on his pegs again, and to shut the man's gate; we assured him that, as our mothers had taught us, it must be for the best—that if some one had not stolen his watch, he might have caught the smallpox; or, we might have got our legs into a hole in the sidewalk and had them broken; or—or—or, there might have been a great fire, or we might have been bitten by a mad dog; or the world might have come to an end, or some other awful thing might have happened; and, all in all, it was no doubt "all for the best," though we acknowledged our inability to prove it, just then.

After a time Jake's grief found expression in a torrent of tears, and convulsive sobs; and, after we had stood around him, in respectful silence for a quarter of an hour, offering nothing that might mar the even flow of his comforting sorrow, we rallied him,

and assured him that what was, was; and what wasn't, wasn't; and what isn't, isn't—including his precious watch. Hence, we owed it to ourselves, and to our posterity, to get back to the boat, for fear we might get left; and so, Jake said, "All right; but I'd like to kill the confounded thief that has my watch, that my pap gimme, an' if I ever go into another panner-rammer fur fifteen cents, I hope to be dod-rotted to dod-rotation, anyway!" Jake did not entirely forget his grief for many days, and several times when he awoke in the night we could hear him silently weeping, we presume for his pap's watch, and because of the rich mine of sinfulness he had struck, so early in his career as a traveler.

Our trip to the rapids, near Keokuk was quite uneventful, and while the writer enjoyed the beautiful scenery along the great river, our companion generally either remained in his room, or else he sat on the shady side of the boat, his hat drawn down over his eyes, staring up into space and, to all outward appearances, thinking deeply about nothing. But we excused Jake's evident melancholy, under the circumstances, for even at best, it was only "once in a blue moon" that he undertook the perpetration of a whole sentence, and never, unless in the highest of spirits or in some trying emergency. We have often thought since, that it was our trip with Jake that developed us into so great a talker; for, upon that occasion we were forced to do all the talking for two, and all the more, owing to the perpetual chain of circumstances that demanded of us an extraordinary amount of loquacity.

At the rapids the boat transferred her passengers around the great natural barrier to navigation that existed, and at Montrose—at the head of the rapids—we again embarked on a smaller boat belonging to the same line, to continue our journey to Muscatine, to which point our passage was paid and at which place we expected to have money enough left to buy tickets for St. Paul.

During the half day we stopped at the miserable little town of Montrose, awaiting the transfer of baggage, freight, etc., we met with another mishap, that completely unbalanced us. As Jake and ourself were putting in our time by wandering along the beach not far from the boat, picking up pretty stones, and really enjoying ourselves more than at any time since beginning our

journey, a very finely dressed, and delightfully pleasing young man came up to us, and appeared to also interest himself very much in picking up the little gems occasionally found along the water's edge. He casually inquired if we were passengers on the boat soon to depart—the "Ben Campbell"—to which we replied affirmatively. He said he was going up on that boat, and asked how far up the river we were going, and we told him to St. Paul. He seemed delighted, and assured us that St. Paul was also his destination, and that he was ever so glad to find such pleasant companions for the long trip. Of course we were in turn, very much pleased to be made so much of by so elegant and accomplished a young man, and it was not long until a thorough and mutual admiration society was formed—so far as outward appearances went. After chatting and laughing, for a time, as we wandered up and down the beach, our newly made friend(?) suddenly, and as if the recollection had just occurred to him, turned to us and said:

"Oh, say, boys! Have you seen that big turtle they have up yonder, at that place where the big red sign is?"

We assured him that we had not.

"Well, well!" said he, "If you haven't seen that turtle, you'd just better go right up now and see it."

By this time Jake's eyes began to stick out with interest, as he ventured to ask how big it was; and said he had "ketched" one once in the mill-dam at home that was as big as a pie-tin.

"Big as a pie-tin!" exclaimed our friend, "why this one up at the red sign is six feet across his back, and has a head bigger than yours—you just ought to go up an' see him."

"Je-whillakers krout!" exclaimed Jake, in return, his eyes looking like a couple of onions, "I'd like to see him."

"Well," said our friend, "If you'd like to go up, I'll go along."

"All right," the writer remarked, "we'd be obliged to you," and off we started to see the wonderful beast-reptile; for the truth was, the writer was quite as much excited on the turtle question as was Jake.

Arriving at and entering the open door of what seemed to be a saloon, our friend asked the person in attendance where the turtle was; he said the man had taken it to water, and would be

back with it in a few minutes; to just make ourselves comfortable about the place in the meantime.

At this, our friend turned to us and said: "Well, boys, this is a pleasant room, and we can just look about a little till they bring the turtle back. By the way," he continued in a sort of confidential undertone, "see, they are playing cards over at the other end of the room; suppose we just carelessly work over that way; I'd like to see regular cards played once—I never saw *reg'lar* cards played in my life." Accordingly, we all sauntered over that way, where a tall, gaunt looking man, dressed in a blue-jeans suit and white choker, stood behind a table, tossing three cards sort of carelessly about him, and offering to bet that no one could turn up a certain one of these cards—all three he exhibited after he had given them a careless toss, one over the other. Our new-made friend seemed much interested in the simple-appearing little game, and asked the man to show him a certain one, and then see if he could not turn it up, after he, the tall man, had manipulated them, just for fun, without betting anything. The man accommodated him a couple of times, and sure enough, our friend turned the winning card each time, which *seemed* to astonish the card-man not a little; yet, Jake and the writer could easily keep our eye on the right card, as he tossed them about, and it seemed certain that the man must lose every bet.

Finally the man offered to bet our friend a twenty-dollar gold piece that he could not turn up the right card the third time, which bet was accepted and won as easily as not. By this time Jake was thoroughly excited; he *knew* he could turn up the right one a thousand times in succession; and, beside, our companion now urged Jake to go for it—there was a fortune in it; and Jake began to step around, like a hen on a warm griddle, his hands twitched nervously in his pockets, while his eyes were protruding with the idea of at least increasing our greatly depleted purses at one fell stroke. But, whilst our friend had been betting and winning so easily every time, and urging Jake to avail himself of the wonderful opportunity to, make a haul, the writer had been slyly looking about the place, and scanning the faces of those who were in the room, and had finally decided that we had been inveigled into a bad place: we nudged Jake, and whispered to

him: "Let us run out of here, quick; they're fooling us about the turtle, and I believe they are going to rob us," and the writer started for the door. Jake followed to the door and declared he could turn the right card, he knew; our friend who had also followed, insisted that it was all right, and that if we needed any more money, now was our time to get it, etc., and seemed so much interested in us that, in response to Jake's urgent request we gave him (Jake) all the money we had, and told him that if he was bound to risk it, all right—we could stand it if he could. By putting both piles together, we mustered twenty-five dollars of good money, and the ten-dollar counterfeit bill, and Jake shuffled back to the table, spread out his money before the tall man in the blue-jeans suit, and told him there was all the money he had; but that he would wager it against thirty dollars in gold, and the man accepted the challenge; while, to make a still more certain thing in favor of Jake, he allowed him to take the winning card and mark it by turning down one corner. He then took the three and gave them a little toss, one over the other, and there lay in plain sight the card with the corner turned down, and Jake could not resist smiling, though intensely excited at his good luck as he reached out and turned up the winning card—the seven of spades—but when he turned it up it was the jack of hearts! The gambler raked Jake's and our own earthly all into his pile, and ironically asked poor Jake if he had any more money he would like to bet on that "little game."

Jake turned to look at our friend, who had invited us hither, but he was gone; he looked after his money, but it was gone; the turtle was gone, and we told Jake that it was about time that we also were gone, so he staggered along into the open air, while the cold perspiration stood out on his forehead like great beads, as we hastened toward the boat—neither saying a word, but poor Jake looking the very personification of agonized despair. The writer felt, indeed, as though ruin haunted our pathway, yet we could not find it in our heart to heap coals of fire on his poor unfortunate head, then, at least; for he was evidently suffering all the remorse that it was possible for him to bear and be able to walk at all. We finally reached the boat, gained the roof and sat down in the shade in silence, and gazed blankly up town with

our eyes resting upon that fatal sign, and mentally swearing that we never would get off that boat again before reaching Muscatine, unless we were kicked off by the toe of superior authority.

Jake was completely and emphatically silent during the remainder of the afternoon and evening, and we were sufficiently amused by occasionally taking a look at his woebegone countenance—grief seemed to be stereotyped in every feature. He sat, humped over, with both hands in his now thoroughly empty pockets and we feared at times he would either find relief in another of those artistic bursts of grief, or else jump into the river, partly with a view to drowning his sorrow, and to make sure his escape from the snares of a traveler's life that might still be in store for him. But Jake finally weathered it through, and the next morning we could not resist the temptation of asking him if he thought he had made a good purchase in the way of experience at Montrose. He said he had got experience enough about cards and turtles to last him awhile, but he didn't know what was to become of us after we got to Muscatine. This broke the ice, and so we sat down in a retired corner, and began to discuss seriously, the prospects, organizing ourselves into a committee on "ways and means." There seemed to be ways in abundance, but the means were emphatically *non est*; and what were the ways good for with no means to put any of them into execution?

At last we arrived at the end of the paid portion of our journey, with no plan of action fully decided upon. We went ashore promptly, however, and with our grip-sacks wandered up into the town, rather hoping, and yet half fearing, that something might turn up. But nothing occurred for our benefit during the two hours of our sitting and standing around the corners; at last we concluded, that as we were thoroughbred "country jakes," and did not know the first principles necessary to striking a job in town, we had better strike for the country, and see if we could not get something to do, whereby, in time, our shattered fortunes might be mended to a sufficient extent to enable us to pursue our journey.

Accordingly, just as evening was beginning to throw somber shades athwart the valleys, Jake and ourself ascended the hill in the rear of the town, with saddened hearts, and our grip-sacks swung on sticks across our shoulders.

As we plodded along, more engaged in thought than in conversation, we gradually emerged into an open country, where nothing broke the monotony of the scene, the great prairie seeming to fade away in the leaden horizon. Toward night the farmhouses began to be farther and farther apart, until, when twilight overtook us, we found ourselves far out on a plain with no habitations in sight. Hoping we should not have to travel many miles before this treeless waste would be crossed and a settlement reached, we trudged on until the night grew so dark that we could follow the dim road no longer, and still no "light in the window" could be distinguished in any direction. At last we were reluctantly compelled to abandon the idea of reaching a settlement that night, and lest we should miss the road and become hopelessly lost, we suggested to Jake that we "go into camp" until morning, disagreeable though it might be.

It must have been nine o'clock—though we could only guess at the time, since Jake lost his "pap's watch," but it is likely we were able to arrive at a more correct guess without it than with it—when we gave up the tramp for the night; the weather was not cold, though it began to cloud up and threaten rain. We had just emerged from a long, low tract of country, and reached a slightly elevated plateau, and we told Jake that here was our spot to camp. The writer pretty well knew of what some of the exercises of the night would consist, and so, after depositing our grip-sacks together close to the track, we ordered that we both now feel our way back to where the tall dry cane-grass of the last year's growth, stood thickly on the ground. Here, with our pocket-knives, we cut a large armful each, and also a small bunch of tough wire-grass, and with it returned to the higher ground where our carpet-bags had been left. Jake ventured to inquire a couple of times what we intended doing with the cane-grass, but we only answered that possibly he might find out before morning.

After reaching our "camp," we had Jake divide the dry cane into small bundles, or wisps, whilst we took small wisps of the wire-grass for bands and bound about them at intervals, making about twenty of the cane faggots. Then taking a match, of which we fortunately had plenty, we lighted one to test its burn-

ing qualities, and found it to be dry as tinder, burning brightly, and throwing its brilliant light far about through the increasing blackness of the gathering night.

We now told Jake that all there was left for us to do was to curl down on the grass, using our "grips" for a pillow, and make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances, present and prospective, would admit. That on the morrow we should doubtless span this dry and treeless plain, and reach civilization again where we would probably find employment and something to eat.

As for ourself, the prospect before us was not particularly discouraging, because, on our first trip to the West—as will be remembered by our readers—we had suffered hardships, alone, the equal of which did not probably lie in store for Jake and ourself in the present emergency. But Jake, to whom all such trials were entirely new, seemed very much cast down; probably the more so, as he felt that he had been the means of bringing us to our present condition of penury, and general state of grief. But, as Jake's thermometer of courage fell toward zero, ours arose proportionately, which was fortunate enough; and when he would venture to blame himself for being the instrument of all the misfortunes that he was sure lay in store for us, we would rally him, and fairly scream a jubilee of some sort to drown his melancholy and revive his drooping spirits.

Upon telling Jake that we had better retire to rest upon the velvety green of that vast domain, he made a few remarks to the effect that he had never yet been compelled to sleep on the ground, and he wouldn't have his mother know he was so exposed to the danger of taking "death of cold," for a fortune; she would weep her eyes out. We assured Jake that "taking cold" was the least concern we felt, and as for his mother knowing about the "fun" we were having, she simply didn't, and that was the best of it. "Yes," said Jake, "a little more such fun as we've been havin' will kill just a mule—confound the goin' west, anyhow." We told him that what he had seen and experienced was only called "fun" in this country, and that there was nothing under the blue sky that could kill, or even injure, two such perfectly accomplished potato-threshers as we were, anyway.

So we talked on, as we lay prone upon the earth resting our



weary limbs, and at last Jake asked us something more, relative to the use we proposed putting the cane faggots to, and also said something about being "all-fired hungry," as he dozed off into a sort of semi-conscious sleep. Thus matters stood—or rather lay—with us, when suddenly there came up from the low cane-flats a long, half howling, half gurgling cry, ending with a sharp, strange "yap-yap!" Jake sprang up with a sudden twitch, to a sitting posture and, in a startled undertone exclaimed:

"Oh, good Lordy, what's that?"

We could fairly hear his heart thump, in the dead silence that followed, and at last we told him that it was a wolf; and a wolf that was probably about as hungry for a square meal as ourselves.

"A wolf! Oh, cremany Lordy! Did you say it was a *wolf*!—oh, isn't it something else?"

"No, Jake," we answered, "it is really a wolf; and before we hear the last of him, we'll hear more of him, it is altogether likely, and from more of *them*, also."

"Oh, jewhilaker Lordy! is there wolves in this here country?"

"Yes, Jake; on these solitary flats, among the rank growth of prodigious wild grasses—is where these terrible creatures breed in countless numbers, and live to make night hideous with their mad howlings; they feed upon mice, frogs, small animals, their own aged kind, and an occasional traveler across arid wastes; these brutes—

"Oh, let us go somewhere! Oh, I'll never go west again—we haven't no gun, no trees to climb—oh, what'll become of us! I never seed a wolf, nor never didn't hear no wolf afore, neither; what'll come of us now—oh, if mother only know'd how it is with me now, she'd die-i-i!"

After begging him to be a little careful about his grammar, if he had any, we told Jake that all that could be done was to "put our trust in the Lord and keep our powder dry,"—or our cane faggots, which amounted to the same thing as powder, in our case.

"Well, I ol'ays did trust in the Lord, an' al'ays was purty good, too, but what'll we do jist now—are they very dangerous?"

We told him they were prairie wolves, and they were not apt to be very dangerous, unless driven to bravery by hunger, and were

in large numbers. And then another howl came up from the flats not far off.

"Oh, dear there's another one!" exclaimed Jake; "Oh, if mother and pap know'd we's goin' to be eat up with wolves—wah, wah, boo-o-o-o!"

Jake was now on his feet, prancing and dancing about like a chicken with the pip as he peered out into the surrounding darkness; the howls became more frequent, and from various quarters, showing that the creatures had scented what they thought would prove a good midnight supper. In less than an hour from the time the first wolf was heard, there were at least a dozen in a pack, venturing quite uncomfortably close to the two original "tramps" of the state of Iowa. Jake had grown almost frantic with terror, and he had not only repeated all the lamentations of woe he could think of, a hundred times, but had been mindful of his devotional duties as well; hoping against hope that he might be delivered from the snarling, snapping, howling horde that surrounded us. The writer should have been in full sympathy with Jake in his trepidation, had it not been for three reasons: We had heard wolves before; these were only prairie wolves with more noise than bravery, and even if they dared assail us, our dry torches would drive them away. After they had grown quite bold, and presumed to approach within a few rods of us, and after poor Jake had suffered a deep repentance, we gave him a bundle of dry cane, and taking another ourself, we told him, the moment we lighted them, to follow, or run with us directly toward them. Jake trembled out, "Oh Lordy," at the idea, but in an instant both torches were aflame, and with a yell we sprang toward them with a perfect flambeau of fire; ere they could realize their situation we were almost among them, brandishing our fiery weapons in all directions as if determined to fire every one of their bushy tails; the animals were taken all by surprise by the sudden onslaught, and with despairing howls they flew for their lives toward the cane-cover from which they came. Quickly returning and lighting others, we again with frantic yells, and swaying our torches, pursued to the very low lands, while our enemies could be heard flying through the dry brakes in all directions, yelping and howling until lost in the dis-

tance. Then, ere our torches were entirely consumed we returned again to our camp, with a general shout of victory, and a "Thank the good Lordy!" from Jake.

The remainder of the night was spent in discussing the subject of "wolf," and kindred topics, as well as the prospect of finding work the next day. At the earliest gray of dawn, we were again on the road, very weary from the effects of the excitement of the night just passed on this lonely and dreary waste.

At noon we arrived at a settlement and were treated to a plain but substantial meal at the home of a pioneer, but found no likely place at which to apply for employment, until about sundown, when we came to the home of an extensive and well-to-do farmer, where we called. His wife, in answer to our inquiries for employment, said her husband was out in a distant field, but would be in before long, and it was probable he could do something for us; in the meantime the good woman asked us to sit down and partake of a bowl of milk and bread, which we gladly did. We were about finishing our repast as the farmer entered, and his wife made known the object of our call, when he flew into a terrible rage, and threatened that unless we got off his place instantler he would blow our brains out with his shot-gun. He offered no explanation of his conduct, and indeed we asked for none; we went, and did not stand upon the order of our going. But, as we passed out of the gate, we could not resist doffing our hats and bowing thanks to the good but terrified woman who stood in the door. This scare was almost equal to a wolf-fright, as we both decided, after getting entirely out of danger.

That night we stayed with an extremely poor family living a little off the road. They bade us welcome to their very humble home, and gave us liberally of the little they had to eat. He had come to that country but a year before, lived on a rented piece of land, and as he had no team to work it, nor cows or other property, he had made extremely poor headway at supporting himself and wife and their nine daughters ranging from one to sixteen years of age. After we had partaken of his corn bread and weak tea, the poor man entertained us until a late hour by relating to us the story of his life, from a young man, which was certainly the most eventful and thrilling narrative we had ever listened to.

It consisted of eras of misfortune and deepest poverty, one only differing from another, as time rolled on its additional misery and distress. Yet, after all, he seemed to enjoy reciting it, and being a glib talker, his story was filled with deepest interest. He said he did not know how he came to be as well off as he was; and indeed it was surprising that he or any member of his family were alive, even allowing only half of all he related, to be true, and he told a frank, straightfoward tale, and was apparantly honest in all he said. Our weary limbs rested well on a pile of hay in the loft that night, and in the morning after eating very sparingly—for our conscience would not permit of our doing full justice to the meal—we bade adieu to our kind friends and wishing them better success for the future, we once more struck the road in quest of either fortune or misfortune. But, during the whole day we could not banish the recollection of this poor, and hospitable family from our mind and this tended to soften our murmurs against our own hard lot.

When night again overtook us we had arrived at the beautiful capital of Cedar county—Tipton. We had traveled and fasted nearly all day, and as we entered the town, we rested on the steps of the flouring mill of the place, and after a little time the writer entered and asked the benevolent-looking old miller for a quart of wheat, which he checrfully poured into our hat. We returned to Jake with our prize, and while he sat devouring our singular repast, the old miller came to the door, and gazed curiously at us. Coming down and taking a sent near by he asked us who we were, where we were going and how we came to be so hungry, etc. We briefly related our history, adding that we were in search of employment, being anxious to earn money enough to reach our yet distant destination. After hearing us through he said we had indeed been having a hard time of it; and, as our statements seemed honest, he would give us lodging at his home for the night, and even for a couple of days, until we could look for a situation. We grasped his hand and thanked him with tears in our eyes for his noble generosity—Jake had done the crying thus far on the whole trip, and now it was our turn.

We found the miller's wife to be as hospitable as himself, and we were made most cordially at home despite the fact that we

had grown seedy and wayworn; After supper, however, we repaired to the mill-pond and made all the improvements possible in our appearance, and while making our toilets resolved in order that we might not intrude unnecessarily upon our kind friends, to bestir ourselves early on the morrow in search of work.

When morning came, and breakfast was over, we started for a tour about the adjacent country; and after many applications Jake obtained employment in a brick-yard at fifty cents a day and board. We returned in the evening, and on the following morning Jake wended his way to his new home, which was about two miles from the village. His work was very hard and rough but he faithfully toiled all that summer and till late in the autumn, among the soft bricks and in the clay-pits, saving his money and gaining the good opinion of his employer.

Of course, the writer was too light a weight as yet to perform any very heavy labor, and so we had to look about for some occupation that would come within the scope of our ability. Our greatest concern, however having been to see our companion provided for, joy was complete when he had obtained a "home." We felt, as we must confess, a real sadness as we parted with Jake—he going to the brick-yard, and we on another tour about the neighboring country. After traveling nearly all day without getting either work or anything to eat, we retraced our steps to the village, with a sad heart and aching limbs. As we passed down the principal street, we accidentally looked up and read the following sign: "Tipton Advertiser—Printing Office." Why we suddenly became possessed of the idea of going up stairs into this newspaper office to apply for a situation—in the last occupation we should, under ordinary circumstances, have thought of—we have never been able to understand to this day. Nevertheless, go up we did, and as we cautiously and diffidently entered the strange place we seemed to become impressed with a sort of queer sensation, and even after entering the main office, we were on the very point of turning and running down stairs again, ere we might be discovered—but it was too late. The foreman of the place, as we afterward found him to be, hailed us with, "Heyo, young man, what can I do for you?" We approached nearer, and in a stammering way asked if the proprietor was in. "Yes, he's right

in the next room—the editorial room—would you like to see him?” We almost choked as we gasped out that we should like to see him if he was not particularly engaged. “All right, come this way,” said the foreman, and he opened the door and ushered us into the presence of the editor, saying: “Judge here is a young hopeful who says he would like to interview the editor;” and then he turned and went back into the main office. The editor was a middle-aged man, large, a far more than ordinarily fine-looking gentleman, well-dressed, with a kindly face and sort of fun-loving eyes. As we gazed at him for an instant, our knees fairly knocked together, and we felt as though if we didn’t sink through the floor, we should feel ever so thankful if some seen or unseen hand would throw us out at the window, ere *he* spoke, or *we* were compelled to speak to him. As we stood by the door-casing cogitating upon our ridiculous position, the editor swung around on his chair, and for a full half minute said not a word, as he eyed us sharply from head to foot. Pretty soon he sort of half smiled and said:

“You want to see the editor, do you, you young straddle-bug?”

We ahemed and hawed, and made out to say “yes sir,” though we never *meant* “no sir,” more emphatically in all our born days.

“Well, sir,” he continued, do you want to whip an editor, or anything of that sort?”

“N-o s-i-r,” we replied.

“Do you want to subscribe for my very excellent paper?”

“I have nothing to pay with,” we answered.

“Well, what the jumping John Rogers *do* you want with the editor, anyway?”

“When I came up stairs, I intended to ask if you had any work that I could do; but I don’t suppose you have?” we made out to say.

“Work to do! what could you do in a printing-office?”

That was a poser, and we frankly told him we did not know; but that we could *try* to do something, if he had anything that a common boy could work at.

“Come over here,” he said, “and sit down till I look you over a little—there; sit right there, till I gaze at you.”

What a “funny man,” thought we as we hesitatingly seated

ourself before him; we should have given all the work we expected to perform for the next six months, to be again down stairs and in the open air of freedom once more.

"Now, you young catfish," he began, as he quizzically eyed us, "what's your name?"

We told him what it was, in full.

"Where did you come from?"

"From Pennsylvania, sir."

"Is this your first trip to golden sunset land?"

"No sir; I spent a year and a half on the Minnesota border, and am on my way to that Territory again, but I got out of money, and am hunting employment, that I may earn money enough to continue my journey to St. Paul."

"Then you've traveled some?"

"Yes sir—a little."

"How did it happen that you came into a newspaper office to find work?"

"I have been in search of work for two days among the farmers, without finding any; and as I was coming down street I happened to see your sign, and thought I would come up and see if you needed a boy."

"Do you think you would make a good 'devil' in a printing office?"

"A good w-h-a-t?"

"A good 'devil'—you know the boy in a printing office is always called the 'printer's devil,' and most of them are first-class devils. I have one now who is a finished young devil, but he is not a good 'printer's devil,' nevertheless."

"What part of the business do you expect a good 'devil' to do?" we ventured to inquire.

"Well, young man, a *good* devil about a printing office gets up with the chickens, every morning; he goes to bed at night just when there is nobody around any more to order him about; he does everything with a pleasant smile; he sweeps the office, saws the day's wood, carries in a supply of water, and dusts the furniture before breakfast; then, after a frugal meal, he does all manner of chores about the place, runs errands, attends to all the dirty and disagreeable little jobs, rolls the ink-roller on press-

days, carries papers, folds papers, makes fires, and in short anything under Heaven that anybody about the premises can think of to keep him busy. The wages for the first six months, if a *good* devil, is board, one suit of cheap clothing and fifty cents a week; after that, according to merit."

We intimated to him that it was a less money-making business than we had supposed, but we did not know but that we should have to try it, at any rate until we could do better.

"Well, my boy," he continued, "I have been wanting to get a *good* boy for some time; the one I've got now wouldn't make good fish-bait; you seem to be frank in your story, and if you will go to work, and turn out well, I may do a little better by you than that." Accordingly, it was arranged that we come early the next morning, and that we board with the editor's family.

Our life in Tipton would doubtless have been uneventful had we not been made a member of a magnificent military company—the "Tipton Guards"—shortly after our enstallment as head "devil" in the *Advertiser* office. Old Capt. Hammond, formerly of Pittsburgh, was the commander of the company, and Judge Spicer was second in command. At that time a strong militia force was kept in Iowa, and there were in the state fifty or more companies of as finely drilled soldiers as could be found in the Union army, several years later. The Dubuque Rifles were considered the finest company in all the state, up to the time of the state fair in the year of which we speak; on that occasion, however, when nearly the whole state force were assembled for review, Captain Hammond and his Tipton guards had the extreme satisfaction of carrying off the prize for the best company at the state parade, both for discipline and perfection in drill. The prize—a gorgeous stand of colors—was handsomely won, and as handsomely accorded by the vanquished troopers.

A month or two after we had entered upon our career as a frisky junior in the "art preservative of all arts," Judge-Lieutenant Spicer called us into his private office one day and asked if we did not want to become a member of the Guards—that the company numbered over ninety, but there was yet room for four or five more persons who might be selected and were desirable. He said we could barely come up to the required height, and as



he had taken "quite a shine" to us, he felt sure Captain Hammond would be pleased to admit us as a member of the "pony squad" of his company. Of course, the idea of becoming a "bold soldier" was decidedly to our adventurous taste—especially in so fine a company as the Guards, whom we had already seen on two parade occasions. We told the Judge that we should be more than pleased at the idea, but did not possess the shekels necessary to get the expensive uniform required. To this he answered, "Never mind the uniform—I will take care of that myself. Come with me down to our company tailor and be measured for your suit, and all the etceteras for the outfit we have in supply in our armory." So, we went at once and had our measure taken for the garment part of the outfit, and thereafter drilled two hours every day, in a small "awkward squad," under the instruction of a sergeant, until the next general parade of the company, we appeared in the ranks on the left wing, in the rich and gorgeous full uniform, ready for immediate and active service on the field.

Captain Hammond had been an officer in the Mexican war, was a prominent citizen both in Pennsylvania and his adopted state of Iowa; a most thorough disciplinarian, a polished gentleman and a brave commander. He took the greatest pride in his company, as the company certainly did in him. He could perform any company-movement in the infantry tactics with his command, with an accuracy that was simply marvelous.

This is a description of the Tipton Guards as they appeared in in the flowery part of military life—or military parades—but, on the other hand, we will describe something, which, in that day, was considered a severe test in the less showy duties of a soldier.

— Many persons will remember that at that time the troubles with horse-thieves in central Iowa culminated, and after several years of patient suffering on the part of the law-abiding citizens of the State, they finally arose in a grand army for self-protection against almost an army of thieves who had become so thoroughly organized that horses were being run out of the country by hundreds, or even thousands. As was subsequently discovered, the thieves had regular organizations in every county, with dis-

strict and general headquarters; commanders-in-chief and subordinates, with regular places of rendezvous, while their lines of communication ran clear into Arizona, Texas and other western fastnesses. Scores of them had been arrested in various parts of the State, and yet their numbers—or the numbers of their depredations—seemed to increase, and even those arrested were seldom convicted, for some inexplicable reason. At last as before stated, the citizens rose in squads of hundreds, in various localities, and simultaneously, as if by previous arrangement, caught all the thieves they could find, or those against whom well grounded suspicion rested, and ornamented(?) the limbs of the forest with their dead bodies.

Of course, all these proceedings, while they were secretly approved by all classes, were opposed to the dignity and order of the State, etc., and the mobs that were everywhere sweeping all law before them had to be suppressed, and the militia in the vicinity of their operations were called out for that purpose. It happened that Cedar county and the Tipton Guards were seemingly near the middle of the territory being overrun by the mobs, and the result was that the Guards were called out in the outset, and kept on forced marches first in one direction and then in one direction and then another, by night and day, for several weeks.

A mob of eight hundred men, early in the fray, caught two of the thieves who had been operating in the vicinity of Tipton. They were captured in an oak thicket about three miles from the town; word was brought to town, and under orders from the State the Guards flew to arms, and marched by double quick to the seat of the trouble. The mob threatened to clean out the militia if they dared to interfere, and when we arrived, preparations were being made to string up the two pleading thieves. Capt. Hammond, however, was not the man to quail in the presence of danger, and the threatening mob knew it. Though the mob could have annihilated the company at one fell swoop, had they been organized—and their wrath at the idea of losing their prisoners was sufficient to incite them to fatal resistance.

Our commander, demanded, in the name of the State, the surrender of the two prisoners, which was angrily refused by the

spokesman of the mob, and Captain H. ordered his company to "Load," and "Fix bayonets!" The mob, as the soldiers went through all the necessary manual in obedience to the order, became almost hushed, as they watched with unmistakable admiration the perfection with which the order was fulfilled. The ropes were already around the necks of the cringing prisoners, and the mob, which had been a swaying, cursing mass of men, now stood like statues—not a word being spoken to break the stillness, save the quiet yet earnest orders of our commander. We took note of the two or three minutes that passed there, as being a space of time that "tried men's souls." There we were, one hundred men under orders, against eight times our number of sorely wronged and determined fellow-citizens, who had been maddened by the outrages perpetrated upon them, to the course they were pursuing: they had, too, entered into a compact with thousands of other citizens throughout that region to rise in their might, and never cease the "good work" until the last horse-thief had expired, at the hands of an outraged populace.

At last, the company, with their bayonets fixed and pieces loaded, came to a "shoulder arms." Then, Captain H., with a wonderful coolness and precision turned and saluted the mob, saying: "Men, in the name of the State of Iowa, and by authority of the governor thereof, I demand the surrender of the prisoners into my hands—this is my final demand, and must be acted upon instantly, or I shall move to their rescue!"

A slight swaying was now noticeable, and a low muttering hum began to vibrate through the mob, which grew louder and more general as the moments passed, with no direct response to the command of our captain. At last the order came, "Charge bayonets—forward, double-quick, march!" The company sprang forward in solid line, and as they advanced with thundering tread, the mob fell back in confusion before the wall of bayonets, and left the prisoners to be captured rather than to be surrendered. Many a heart beat lighter, as a hollow square was formed and the prisoners placed therein, in which position they were conducted safely to town, the mob following closely behind, hooting and howling, firing their guns and pistols in the air, and making the most threatening demonstrations.

The prisoners were confined for the night in the court house, with a strong guard both inside and out, and ere night came on the mob had, to all appearances, dispersed. In fact, it was believed that they had given up their plans of violence, and had departed to effect the capture of others, whose whereabouts were understood. It was not until nearly daylight, when the town and the company—now completely off their guard—were fast asleep, and even the court-house guards had grown lax in their vigils, that all surmises as to the movements of the mob were found to be false. The gray dawn of morning was made hideous by their yells, and the carnage of their onslought, as they came rushing from all sides into the court-house square, bearing immense timbers, with which to crush in the doors. Ere the company could rally, or people could get dressed, the wooden court-house had been nearly demolished, the shrieking prisoners dragged out, hurried into the suburbs of the village and hung to a tree until they were dead—the company arriving on the scene only to see the mob dispersing in the uncertain light of morning, and to witness the last death struggle of the two poor wretches—Gleason and Soper, both young men, who had been among the leaders of the local branch of the great gang of thieves. The company cut down their bodies, took them back to the court-house, and in less than an hour from the time the first yell of the mob was heard, the corpses of the two prisoners were laid out in the now nearly demolished court-house, awaiting the claims of friends, if they had any. Thus ended our first campaign of actual service, and the company was disbanded, subject to call.

But our company, above all others in the State, seemed to be unfortunately located to gain much rest. Every day or two, and sometimes in the blackest hour of night, the long roll of the company's drums would summon us to the public square, for an expedition in some direction, in response to a summons for help; and, though every member came to arms in an instant, the company marching with the utmost haste and promptness—night or day, rain or shine—they never encountered any of the mobs in a pitched battle, though on several occasions bloodshed was barely prevented. This fact, we attributed, and correctly, we think, to the fact that the mobs and their leaders well knew the character

of the man who commanded the Tipton Guards. They knew that Captain Hammond would not hesitate when in the line of his duty, no matter what stood in the way, nor how great the odds were against him.

On one occasion we made a forced march to a place where an old man and his two sons were said to be in the hands of the mob, but hearing of our approach, they hastened their work, and by the time the troops arrived, they were just passing out of sight over the rolling prairie, leaving their victims hanging to a wide-spreading tree, shot full of holes, while pinned on the breast of the father was this card :

“These men gave succor and aid to horse-thieves, and their place was a safe retreat for thieves in distress. We know this for a certainty, and for this they have died at our hands. Take them now, we are through with them. Signed, “Regulators.”

When they saw our approach, they fired a salute, waved their hats, and disappeared in the distance, whilst the company returned home with the dead.

Another time, the company was summoned to duty about midnight, of a terrible stormy and gloomy night. A messenger had arrived from Mechanicsville—if we remember correctly—bringing the news that a mob of ten or twelve hundred men had entered that town in the evening with several prisoners, and when the messenger left they were being put through the form of a hasty trial, preparatory to being “swung off.” That they swore if any interference was interposed by the authorities, they had better say their prayers, etc. The messenger said they were in such great force that they would likely take their time, and he thought if we proceeded promptly, and approached the place cautiously, we might effect a rescue.

While the company gathered in the square, Captain Hammond summoned a lot of teams, and in a surprisingly short time ten or twelve wagons left Tipton, pell-mell through the mud and rain, loaded with troops, headed for Mechanicsville, a dozen or fifteen miles away.

Just before reaching the town, the wagons were halted and the company formed, and after loading and fixing bayonets they advanced in silence, making a slight detour, so as to enter the

place from an unlooked for quarter. It was a difficult feat, as it was excessively dark, and a portion of the ground was very rough. At last, however, the little army emerged from a cover of undergrowth, nearly on the opposite side of the town; and stood suddenly on the brow of a hill overlooking the village. Such a sight as met our gaze was awe-inspiring, to say the least. Down in the village, by the glaring light of immense bonfires could be seen a rude scaffold with bodies hanging thereon, and a hooting, howling mob, like specters, running to and fro in the wierd light and apparently preparing to fly from the place. We afterward learned that they had heard of our approach and had hurried up the execution. Captain Hammond, upon seeing that he was again thwarted, at once ordered a countermarch, silently sought the wagons, and just before noon the jaded horses and weary company arrived at their homes.

This was among the very last of our expeditions, and the mobs—we think fortunately for the State and its people—carried the day, in spite of the utmost vigilance on the part of the authorities, and succeeded in thoroughly cleaning out and breaking up the army of horse-thieves who had long maintained a perfect reign of terror throughout the rural districts.

But one more incident occurred in our experience as a member of the Tipton Guards, worthy of mention: It will be remembered, also, that this was the year of the Spirit Lake massacre—wherein the infamous Sioux chief, Ink-pa-du-ta, and his bloodthirsty Indian followers, slaughtered the few families who had settled on the borders of the beautiful Spirit Lake, up on the northern boundary of Iowa. Word of the terrible affair was swiftly brought to the governor of the state, and he in turn promptly telegraphed to several companies of the State troops to repair to the scene of the bloody massacre with the utmost haste.

Of course the Tipton Guards were among the companies ordered to go forward, and now there seemed to be sanguinary business ahead, sure enough.

For such an expedition a considerable preparation had to be made, but if any commander could accomplish speed, that one was Hammond; and instantly on receipt of orders, he had every man summoned to the parade grounds by the long-role-beat, read

them the order from the governor, and then told them that although their fortitude and bravery had been tried to the quick, that duty still called—this time to make all haste to the frontier for the protection of defenseless men, women and children from massacre by the ruthless savage. He knew that not one would flinch or demur, notwithstanding the severe trials they had already undergone, as citizen soldiers.

There were many of the company who, by this time, began to see that *playing* soldier, and *being* a soldier, were two altogether different things; and although they began their preparations for a protracted absence with alacrity, their were many wry faces over it, and a few quaking knees, at thought of being ordered to the frontier to fight Indians.

To the great relief of nearly all, just about the time Captain Hammond had his company in complete readiness for a campaign, and was on the very eve of departure—the good-byes, farewells, and last fond embraces had been said and enacted between lovers and sweethearts, husbands and wives, sons and parents—a message came, countermanding the order, and bidding us hold ourselves in readiness for orders, instead. But, further orders never came, and thus ended the active service of the Tipton Guards, during the time the writer was identified with the organization.

At the end of seven or eight months—having in the mean time been promoted to the exalted position of a sergeant in the Guards—we obtained an honorable discharge, canceled all our obligations to our big-hearted employer, arranged with Jake—who had saved up his earnings—to continue our journey to Minnesota, and we arrived in due time in St. Paul, with no further incident worthy of especial mention, after a lapse of nearly nine months since leaving home. This was our second and last trip to the Northwest, and the singular “accident” of our having, in our extremity gone into the Tipton *Advertiser* office to “get a job,” seems to have decided our life-work—that of a printer and journalist.

Jake, after “roughing it” on the frontier for a year or two, returned home, married, and settled down to the noble task of raising stock, and a large family.



## "A MIGHTY CLOSE SHAVE."

ONCE upon a time, when Minnesota was an extremely young commonwealth, and when the writer was but a nimble youth, we had an adventure with wolves; which, among several other adventures with these denizens of the forest, during those primitive days, always made us despise a wolf.

"Billy" was a frontier chum of ours, and although considerably older, was but little larger of stature than ourself. He was a famous hunter, for so young a man—small, wiry, with a sharp eye, fearless, and well versed in woodcraft. We had often accompanied Billy in his whole day chases, after deer; he would start out as soon as it was light, in a cold winter morning, with his tomahawk and knife in secure position, and after taking a fresh chew, he would say: "Now follow me, and step in my tracks, and I guess you can keep up." At this he would strike what he called a "lope," and we, adopting his gate, would lope after him. Billy was a young man of very few words, and most of them were spoken with such an air of mystery that one had to be well acquainted with him in order to catch their full significance, especially when on one of his hunting excursions. He would keep up a "lope" from morning till night, on the trail, unless he came upon his game before, stopping only at about noon for ten minutes to eat a frozen biscuit, and get his bearings. We accompanied him on more than one occasion when we must have traveled forty miles, through snow more than two feet in depth, the temperature many degrees below zero—up hill and down, through "openians," dense forests and thickets. In those days there was scarcely a settler in the big woods, excepting here and there along



on the river. The whole region was an unsettled, unbounded and almost unexplored wilderness, well inhabited, however, by deer, bear, wolves, lynx, wild cats, etc., with here and there an encampment of wild Sioux Indians.

Upon occasions when Billy failed to come up with his game, he would cease the chase just as nightfall was approaching, and after getting his reckoning, would strike out on the straight line for home. It was upon one of these occasions that he found himself at dark, about seven miles, on a direct line, from our settlement. He proposed that, as we were pretty tired, we take it rather leisurely, and we would be able to make the distance, if we did not lose our course, by bedtime. The moon was shining brightly, but the cold had grown to be intense. We traveled along at as fast a walk as our tired limbs and a deep snow would admit, neither saying anything, more than an occasional question and answer.

We had gone but a short distance, however, when the long heavy howl of a timber wolf was heard from the depths of a thicket that bordered upon a little stream we were about to cross. Billy remarked, merely, "that he was a big 'n." We said, we thought, from the sound, that he was big enough to eat both of us, if he happened to have as good an appetite as ourselves. We trudged along, however, and relapsed into silence. We both knew, that during a long time of deep snow, the wolves were apt to be more fierce than usual, owing to the difficulty in finding food; still, our confidence in our swiftness of foot, and great endurance, made us feel tolerably at ease, especially when we knew the deepness of the snow would considerably retard the speed of the wolves should they strike our trail. We had but barely gained the opposite bank of the stream, when the same howl again reached our ears, which was speedily answered by another and another, until the narrator's hair fairly stood up. We both stopped, involuntarily, as it were, and listened breathlessly for a moment, as the savage howls died away in the dark and silent woods, only to be taken up by another of the hungry monsters. We had every confidence in our companion, both as to his bravery, trueness and sagacity, and knew that whatever might befall us, our own fate would also be Billy's fate.

Finally, Billy remarked in his droll, intrepid manner: "Home's

a better place than this at this time o' night, when them tarnal critters are talkin' that way—kin ye foller me at a pretty fair gait, my lad?"

We told him we would try, but rather intimated to him that we would like to have him stay with us, if we failed.

"Look here boy," said Billy, "I never got into camp without my company; jump into my track every lope, an' it'll be easier fur ye; I know a trail that'll bother them devils, if they foller us, and, mind ye, keep close to me, an' when I jump, ye jump, too, an' we'll give 'em as neat a trot as they've had fur many a day—let's be goin'."

At this, we started, and keeping Billy's instructions in mind, we fell regularly into his tracks as fast as he made and left them. On, on we went with measured strides; the cold had grown so terrible that our feet seemed to be frozen, though our body was steaming hot. Neither of us had on our feet anything but one pair of short-legged woolen socks and a pair of boots, which were frozen like rocks, and our feet began to lose their feeling, which was a bad indication. In response to our inquiry as to how his feet felt, Billy said his didn't feel at all; and he said he reckoned we'd have to take our boots off and go in our stocking feet or else lose our toes.

The wolves had now struck our trail, as we could plainly tell, and there seemed to be a jolly pack of them, indeed. Of course, we could not take to a tree, as we would soon perish with cold; we could not stand our ground, because there were too many of them to fight with old-fashioned muzzle loading rifles, and besides, our hands had become too numb to load, or to even handle our tomahawks probably. The only way out of that "pickle," as Billy called it was to ride out on our legs.

The wolves were evidently gaining on us pretty rapidly, and ere we had made a mile, it seemed as if pandemonium had been let loose at our heels. As we leaped over the bank of a little frozen brook, Billy stopped suddenly and sat down on the snow, as he remarked: "The snarling brutes might just as well have us fur their supper as fur to get home without no feet—we'll do better without no boots on."

At this he snatched the boots off his senseless feet while we followed his example, asking no questions.

"I'll leave my boots right here, and they'll do fur the hungry dogs to fight over fur a minit or two, and they'll lose a little ground for their foolishness; you carry your'n a little furdur on."

Scarcely a dozen seconds were lost in the operation, and again we went bounding through the snow, all the faster from being lighter of foot—though our feet by this time had no more feeling than if they had been made of stone.

Soon the pack, as we could plainly tell, came upon the boots, and for the space of half a minute or so, wolf-jangling of the highest order stirred the monotony of the wilderness. Billy could not resist one of his quaint remarks, and so, between jumps he made out to observe: "I reckon them hounds are janglin' to see which'll wear my boots."

"More likely they're trying to decide which shall eat them," we suggested.

"Well I reckon they're purty scraggly lookin' boots by this time, anyhow," he returned.

It was very evident, that whatever disposition was made of them the pack scented better game ahead, and on they came, gaining steadily on their prey. When within a mile and a half of the settlement, they got so near us that occasionally we could hear their fierce panting, as they came flying along through the deep snow. The case began to look hopeless indeed, and it was evident that unless some unforeseen turn of fortune came to pass in our favor, another half mile must tell the tale of our "wiping out."

It now resolved itself into a race for life, and no mistake. Though our strength began to rapidly fail, our courage, somehow, kept up to a point beyond what might have been expected. Billy, ever and anon, would turn his head and give us a word of encouragement, of some sort, and seemed to feel that the run for life would give us the victory. Just as the wolves came bounding over the brink of a small ravine which we had just crossed, Billy said, "throw your boots and gun." We did so, and in a moment more he threw his gun also. "Get your hatchet in one hand—knife in the other," he said and both acted on the word.

The boots and guns had the effect of somewhat breaking the gait of the pack, and gave us a little start.

On we flew with every nerve strained to the utmost tension, though it seemed plain that they must overtake us ere we reached within half a mile of home, for now the foremost of the snarling, panting brutes were within a dozen rods of us.

"When I jump, you foller me," said Billy, "fur it's our only chance—so don't ye stagger at it, but leap just as I do; d'ye hear?"

We gasped out, "yes" and hardly had we uttered it, ere Billy gave a leap and a yell, and we flew after him. Down, down we went, and the first assurance we had that we had not jumped from the top of the rocky mountains was, that instead of continuing to go through space for a mile or so, we went head over heels into a monster snow drift about forty feet below—Billy landing therein but a few feet from where we struck.

As luck would have it we sprained no joints nor broke a bone, though being somewhat stunned and bruised, and Billy had been equally fortunate; and, true to his character, he soon scrambled out through the drift and called out:

"Whar are ye now, lad? Give us yer voice a trifle; fur I don't want to know I made yer kill yourself—are ye live un' kickin, anywhere 'round here?"

About at the conclusion of his inquiries, we had sufficiently recovered from the shock, and came digging out at the lower side of the drift on to solid footing in the bottom of what was known as "Big Coulie."

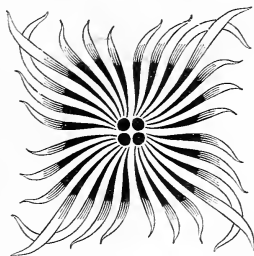
"I thought," he remarked "that we'd give them the slip one way if we couldn't another," he said as he came limping up to where we stood, "an' now the tarnal critters can just howl their heads off, up yonder, if they want to, but their too big cowards to make that sort of jump; an' the only way they can reach us is to go up the Coulie a mile and come down a cross ravine; an' its har'ly worth their while, 'cause we'll strike camp now in a ten minutes' jog, by follerin' down here on the ice."

Sure enough, we left the wolves away up on the verge of the precipice, howling, and fighting each other in their rage, and soon we struck the settlement, a pair of very sorry looking hunters. Our hair and eyebrows, and our clothes were a mass of ice and frost, we found, all our toes, heels, and the sides of

our feet were badly frozen, which kept us within the log cabin for a number of weeks.

We have always since reverted to the adventure as a case of being "Snatched from the jaws of death," or the jaws of a pack of wolves, which amounts to the same thing.

Billy always referred to it as "A mighty close shave."





## LOST IN A STORM.

IT was late in the fall of 1856; the country on the upper Minnesota River was beyond the borders of civilization even at that time. Our brothers had a contract for transporting government freight from St. Paul to Fort Ridgely, then a new military post high up on that tortuous and difficult river. We had made three trips by flatboat and had proceeded up the river on our fourth and last trip to within some forty miles of the post, by land, and double as far by water. We laid up for that night just after passing a tedious rapids, and in the morning found the boat frozen in, and further progress impossible.

This was a "pretty kettle of fish" as our brother expressed it, when in the morning he went out on deck and looked the icy prospect o'er.

A council was held after our breakfast of black coffee, pork and biscuit, and it was resolved that while he would proceed to the fort overland, and employ teams there to haul the freight through, we should proceed to an Indian village not far away, procure an Indian-pony and make the trip thereon back to the village of St. Peter and procure the necessary money to pay the expense of delivering the freight through by team—there being money to our credit deposited at the latter place.

After considerable negotiating we finally procured of the old Indian chief at the village, what afterward proved to be a most faithful little pony, and one capable of the most wonderful endurance.

It was about the middle of the afternoon before we were ready for a start across the uninhabited region stretching away some

thirty or forty miles toward St. Peter; but, nothing daunted, and believing we could follow the rather plain trail, the general course of which was nearly parallel with the river valley, and after getting full instruction from our brother, as well as many a caution to watch our course and to make as much of the distance before nightfall as possible, we gave the pony the regular Indian whoop and were soon out of sight over the neighboring bluffs.

Before leaving the boat we noticed heavy snow-clouds banking up in the west, and had we possessed more experience in the matter of snow storms on the prairies we should have known it to be madness to have undertaken such a trip through such a country in the face of the accumulating evidence of an approaching storm.

Our progress was both rapid and pleasant for the remainder of the afternoon, and as our wiry little horse sped along the trail, and we gazed about on the vast and wild domain on every side, we almost grew enthusiastic at times in its enjoyment. There had fallen the previous night about an inch of snow, and the great prairie rolled away in undulating and solitary grandeur as far as the eye could reach. There was nothing to break the lonely spell that prevailed, save an occasional flock of prairie chickens that would start up in our path, a fox or prairie-wolf that would now and then be startled from his lair, by the clattering hoofs of our little pony, and go scudding away with a "yip" to some locality where there was more quiet and less clatter than there was along our path,

As night approached, the storm also came with it, and by dusk it was snowing very hard, and the wind also blew considerably; though, as good luck would have it, neither the wind or weather were cold. By the time darkness overtook us, we judged we had made two-thirds of the distance, and were within twelve or fifteen miles of our destination. Just before dark we took as thorough a view of the lay of the country ahead and upon either side of us, as the prevailing storm would admit, though about all the landmarks distinguishable were the distant belt of timber that skirted the river away to our right, and the grove at the head of Swan Lake—we believe that is the name of the large lake lying north-west of St. Peter—which latter we passed, and it was the last object we saw during the night that followed.

Up to this time the storm had given us no uneasiness; in those days "roughing it" was but another name for thorough enjoyment; and though but a mere lad, we had been through so many clear and well-defined cases of "roughing it" on the frontier, that the storm in which ourself and our little Indian pony were then thoroughly enveloped promised, to our mind, only a real neat occasion for a bit of rare adventure. The idea of our becoming totally, and well-nigh hopelessly lost on that terrible night never for one instant entered our head. In the first place, we had every confidence in our ability to keep at least somewhere near a proper course, and of coming out all right in a couple of hours or so after night had set in; and besides, we felt sure the pony's instinct would prevent our going very far astray.

The night was not a very dark one, and had it not been for the blinding storm, that had now begun to sweep over the prairie with great severity, we could have kept on our course with but little difficulty.

Very soon after passing Swan Lake, however, we found it impossible to follow the trail, and it was not long until the storm had increased to a fury; all we could do was to sit astride our little animal and bury our face as well as we could in our coat collar and the Indian sash we had wound around our head and neck, our feet were incased in moccasins, and moccasin-blankets, and we wore buckskin leggings, coming above the knee, and mittens of the same material. It was not until we had lost all sight of everything, depending upon the sagacity and endurance of our pony, that we began to realize the terror of our situation. The snow soon grew so deep that the pony could only struggle through it on a walk, and whither he was traveling we knew not, nor did we believe the pony himself could keep his bearings in such a wild storm. The snow fell, seemingly, in masses, and we felt sure that we must be buried alive.

On, on we went. The wind blew a hurricrne and we can never forget the awful sensations with which we were thrilled as it rushed across the plain with that heavy, ceaseless roar only heard where no trees or shrub exists to mar its continuous moan. The little animal that carried us would sometimes stop, and paw the ground in his trepidation, and blow at the nostrils, as if to say



that he was lost, given out and perishing. We could have willingly dismounted and struggled along as best we could on foot, but something seemed to tell us to remain mounted, despite our almost irresistible inclination, through pity, to relieve our noble little animal of his burden. His gait grew unsteady and fitful as the night advanced, and by midnight — as we judged — we had become so chilled, weak and wretched, that it was only with the greatest difficulty we could retain our position, and many times came near rolling headlong into the snow—which, had we done would doubtless have ended our career, as we never could have gained our feet again; much less mounted the almost exhausted pony.

We now felt sure we were wandering, without course, simply governed by the formation of the ground, and as the wind and storm dictated. We lay forward on our pony, and balanced ourself by clinging about his neck with our arms, and thus fell into a semi-conscious state. We had read of persons who had been exposed to these blizzards, and that the greatest danger to be feared was the inability to resist going to sleep—which under such circumstances would prove the last slumber. Against this almost overpowering inclination we aroused our greatest energy, and battled with it as only a determined will could, in the face of a full knowledge of the result, should we give up to it. It did seem, at times, as though we must succumb to the utter stupification that held us in its power like a vice; had we possessed a world, we should have given it all for one sweet sleep. Yet we fought it, and although at times—as if it were a dream—we could see our old home, with its warm fire-place, its cheerful rooms and happy family group gathered around the hearth, we did not lose all knowledge of our actual position. It was a life struggle between an agonizing desire to sleep and an unconquerable determination to remain awake.

A happy circumstance it was, that although as the night wore away it grew colder, yet during the whole time it did not become freezing cold. The storm prevailed with unabated fury until toward morning, when it abated somewhat, though it still kept up with great severity. As if to reward us for our determined battle against an inclination to plunge off into the snow, and sleep and

die, the hours of the approaching morning gradually, and to some extent brightened our senses; though our whole frame was set and stiff, and it was with the greatest pain and difficulty that we could raise our arm to the bridle rein, had we desired to. Of course we had allowed the pony to stand, or proceed, and to wander as he felt disposed during the terrible hours of that awful night, because we felt sure that if he could not find his way to a settlement, through the wonderful instinct the horse is known to possess, certainly it was not in our power to find the way out of the solitude of a trackless, snow-bound, and storm-ravaged plain.

We had well-nigh given up all hope of ever reaching the settlement, however, because we had every reason to believe, by this that the pony had simply been wandering away most of the time—drifting before the terrific storm, and from his spasmodic actions, we knew he could keep his feet but a short time longer at best; and as for ourself, we had now reached and passed several stages of suffering, and the only other thing that now seemed left us to do was to die, and be wrapped in a snowy sheet, and buried by the sweeping and mourning winds.

But, Hark!—no, it was the clamor of the storm. No—listen—is it a voice? We made out to reach the rein and halt the pony, and held the little breath left us to catch the sound—if sound it was, other than the roar of the storm-king, as he reveled in his victory. Yes!—there it is again—away here to the right, and up here in the face of the wind—is surely the sound of a human voice! God be praised!—hark! Yes, it is really true! We grasp convulsively the rein, and turn our dying animal's face to the storm, and urge him to proceed, directly into the jaws of the hurricane; his will seemed to rise in a last struggle to obey our demand, and he crawls along, as the jog of the rein indicates. The sound grows plainer! It is a voice, and seems to be continuous, as if talking loudly! Ho! A light glimmers fitfully through the falling snow! A moment more and we are at the cabin door, The voice ceases within, but we raise ours feebly from without, and a stalwart pioneer opens the door and stares out in utter astonishment. He takes in the situation at a glance, and whilst his noble companion holds a candle in the little window, he carries us in his great strong arms, into his humble cot, which is

half buried in the snow, and lays us on the bed, well back from the fire; then he leads the pony into the shed at the end of the cabin, and returns to ascertain our condition. He finds that we are not frozen, but chilled nigh unto death, and the question is a serious one as to whether we will not perish, even yet.

Consciousness is now blotted out; and when we awake many hours later, we find that everything that kind and thoughtful hearts could do, has been done to warm into renewed existence the trifling life-spark we brought to the humble though hospitable cot.

We found, for two days, such a home in this frontier cabin as is only found among the noble pioneers of our borders. In the meantime, we told them our story of that night, and how we had heard his voice, and followed it till we had reached his door. We asked him what it was he was saying so loudly and continuously as to attract our stupefied attention, and so, guide us through the storm until we found his hut. He said he was engaged, at the time, in family worship; and that it was his prayer—made more than usually powerful and lengthy by reason of the storm that raged without—in behalf of any that might have been overtaken by the storm's fury, that had arrested our attention, and guided us to our rescue—and he thanked God for that early and devout prayer that had proved our saving. Is it necessary to add that we also thanked God for that prayer?

Two days after, our pioneer saviour guided us to St Peter—eight miles distant. We both went on foot, for the noble little horse was found dead, by our host, a few hours after we had reached his cabin.





## ON PICKET.

IT was during the time the Union army was lying in front of Buckner's Confederates, north of Bowling Green, Ky. There was a distance of some ten or twenty miles between the two great armies proper, and the intervening belt was the scene of many a stirring adventure, and narrow escape on the part of both Union and Confederate soldiers. Our regiment had been posted on the line of railroad running from Louisville through Bowling Green and on to Nashville, some two or three weeks ere the incident occurred of which we are about to speak. During that time, however, it was the writer's privilege to be a member of many of the scouting parties, foraging parties, and advance picket-squads. This was the case because we were, most of the time, made a member of these parties by our own urgent request. We never enjoyed better health than during that time. We had enlisted with a set determination to avail ourself of every opportunity to see and experience every phase of a soldier's life, and when hundreds of others murmured we would laugh and kick up our heels in ecstasies, like a juvenile mule in the presence of a hungry lion. We do not claim any special praise for this fact, because it was simply the result of a sort of enthusiastic mania which, whilst it served us well, did not indicate any deeper patriotism, probably, than actuated thousands of those who sometimes murmured under trial. Then again there were thousands of men who had better sense than we, it is to be presumed, and took their service in the army as a very serious business, from the first. We did not strike the idea of its being a very excessively serious business until after we had seen some considerable service; and, as a child

never entertains any fear of the fire until after it has felt its effects, so we did not care a "continental" for all the rebels this side of the Old Harry, until after we had "seen" a few of them. In fact, we were really anxious to get "mixed in" with a lot of them—with a mental reservation, however, that we should at all times "come out on top." But we digress.

After having been out on several rather "scary" expeditions, without anything very frightful having been encountered, we were told one evening by the orderly sergeant to make ready at once for duty on the outer picket-line that was to be posted far toward the front that night. It was, as nearly as we could judge from the quiet movements going on in the preparation of the squad—which was being selected from the several companies of the regiment—to be a sort of secret line that was to be thrown out in the direction of the enemy, and we felt sure there was a good show for some right good soldiering ere another morning came.

Just as the shades of evening were thickening, and the fires of the camp began to glow in the twilight, "we fell into line," and found our squad was a large one—numbering eighty or a hundred men. As the proportion of men that had been selected from our company formed as the center squad of the line, we cast our eye along, and saw by the merest glance that it was composed of "boys" who went to Dixie with "business" in their eye. To still further convince us that there was no fooling, we noticed that the comander appointed over us was "the French Lieutenant," or, as the regiment was wont to call him, "The Walking Arsenal." He was a tall, wiry six-footer, lean, wrinkled, and battle-scarred from head to foot. The boys used to declare that he wouldn't weigh more than fifty pounds, if he didn't have more than a hundred pounds of lead in his body. He had served many years in the French army, and had probably seen as much or more of the war side of soldiering as any man in the Union army, east or west. He was the most terrible disciplinarian that any army could produce; his company was the best drilled of any, and his men had been "put through" so long and so persistently in all the double-quick and running portion of the tactics, the awful boyonet exercises, etc., that they, like himself,

looked more like a company of tongs, than well-proportioned men—they had absolutely been “soldiered to death,” or until they were so wiry and tough, that you could tie any of them into a double-bow knot, almost. His bearing was that of a perfect soldier, and no one ever saw him, either on or off duty, when he did not move like a perfect military machine; he never smiled, and when in the discharge of his duty his movements were a marvel to behold, and he seemed to be filled with the spirits of a hundred military heroes combined. While his accent was exceedingly broken, the commands he gave were easily understood, so emphatic and fiery was his style of giving them—a perfect warrior, never happy save when at war.

When all was ready the lieutenant gave the order, “rat fac’! fil’ lef’, marsh!” This direction faced us to the west, and parallel with the front of the enemy. Without a word being spoken, we marched in this direction—through field and wood, and over hill and ravine—for a mile or more, when our front was changed to the south, through a rough and broken country—a sort of oak barrens. The evening, for a time, was clear, and by the faint starlight we carefully pursued our way for a distance of about two miles. Suddenly we came to a halt in the middle of a dense strip of timber, and here the lieutenant informed us he was to commence posting his line of pickets; posting one man in a place, running his line east toward and across the railroad, forming a line of outer pickets about two miles in front of our army. Each man was to have his beat, across which he was to allow no one to pass; we should not be relieved during the night, and should be held accountable for the faithful and full performance of our duty, until called in, in the early morning; that if any were captured, the picket making the capture should notify the next ones to him. and while they would each take a half of his beat to guard during his absence, the captor would march his prisoner into camp at the point of the bayonet. This was indeed an extraordinary order, and a mode of picket regulations we never experienced before or afterward. Nevertheless, the first duty of a soldier is to obey orders, and we presume that particular squad would have obeyed orders, to the best of their ability, had they been told to “hold the fort” on that beat all winter. It may

have been picket duty on the French plan, however.

Posting his first picket at that point, we filed to the left, or east, and our commander stationed his men at regular intervals having a sufficient number of men to make his line nearly two miles in length, as we judged, extending about the same distance either way from the railroad. Being near the middle of the line, the writer was assigned a beat the easterly end of which rested on the railroad track and the westerly end terminated at an immense oak tree, about twenty rods from the track. The railroad at this point crossed, by means of a bridge, a deep cut, at the bottom of which was a small brook; our beat ran along down by the margin of the brook, which had a steep, caved-off bank all along, from four to six feet, nearly perpendicular, to the brook; the opposite or southern bank of the stream was much lower, sloping gently back to a thick growth of low oak bushes, covered with dry leaves—it being in early December. Here we were left alone in our glory, whilst the command passed on, silently and stealthily, soon being lost in the faint starlight.

At last we felt kind of all-overish, like—something after the fashion of an orphan, as it were. It was a lonely “time of day,” anyway, and was in one of the loneliest places imaginable, and we were alone ourself, as will be inferred. We looked up at the stars, around upon the barrens, as well as we could, up and down our beat, and then cautiously approached the steep bank of the little brook—which “babbled” just a little—and peered down until as our eyes grew a little used to the light, or rather the dark down there, we could discover the faint glimmer of the clear water. Then, quietly taking our bayonet from its scabbard, we “fixed” it on the persuading end of our musket, carefully examined the cap on the tube, and after being satisfied that we were completely prepared for the business of enforcing the laws of the United States, upon either man or beast, we proceeded to make our first cautious trip over our beat, making a note of the slightest object all along in the vicinity. Having run on the river many a *dark* night as well as many a *light* one, we soon figured out the “lay of the land” about us, and had a very accurate idea of the surroundings. On our second trip, we discovered at the railroad end of the beat, the next picket, who was on the other side of the

track, though neither of us spoke; we soon, also, met the picket whose beat ended at the big tree on the other side, and we "visited" once for a moment, but soon separated, and him we did not see again.

About nine o'clock it commenced raining and the rain fell in a torrent, accompanied by the most startling thunder and the most terrible lightning, we had ever heard or seen; even with our heavy army overcoat, we became quite wet, and it was only by the most strenuous efforts that we kept our gun-load from becoming wet. After the storm had passed, we put a fresh cap on the tube to make sure. The ground was flooded with water, and the little brook seemed to be swelling rapidly—we inwardly hoped it would rise six feet at once, and then no rebel spies or other emissaries would attempt to trouble us. The stars came out brightly after the rain, so that a pretty good view could be had for several rods in any direction.

It might have been midnight when, as we carefully walked, or rather waded up and down our beat, we thought we heard a faint noise, as if some one had stumbled and fallen, some distance away, down the track. We halted, and cocked our ear sharply, for a long time, but could hear nothing more; but so convinced were we that it was a well defined sound, that could not have been made save by a human, that we kept our ear primed, while we noiselessly and slowly walked up and down. After a long time we again caught a sound, as if made by some one approaching up the railroad track, cautiously along on the ties, and thus it proved.

Nearer and nearer came the cautious tread, until the person, whoever it was, approached the other end of the open railroad bridge; by this time we could distinguish a form, and quietly putting ourself into perfect readiness, we did not take our eyes from the figure. When he reached the bridge he halted, and for a moment or two was evidently estimating whether he had better attempt to follow the narrow board along the center of the track, over the bridge, or go down off the embankment and wade the stream. We are free to confess that we mentally prayed if he decided on the latter course, he would go down the bank on the other side and cross the stream on the next soldier's beat—but



he didn't. No; that is why we scribble these "few lines"—he crossed the stream, and attempted to cross the picket line on the beat over which we had been given the special supervision for the night.

While he proceeded with the utmost caution, as became a soldier and a spy—which he doubtless was—it was evident to our mind that he did not expect to encounter a line of Union outposts for some distance further on.

After abandoning the idea of crossing the bridge, he turned and went back along the track a few rods and then descended the high embankment into the oak thicket, and cautiously, though not altogether noiselessly, approached the brook and our post. We kept silently changing our position to correspond with his advance, and it was soon evident that he knew where the best place to clamber up the steep bank on our side was located. We saw the spot he was aiming for, and opposite this and back a few feet we crouched, ready to "welcome him with bloody hands to a hospitable grave," if that should be the only course left us. Soon he emerged from the brush and came lightly down to the water's edge, where for a moment he halted and cast his eye up and down the stream and around him. Then he deliberately waded in, hip-deep, and by a few steady strides reached the embankment. We could see him sufficiently plain to tell that he carried no gun, but when he gathered up his long, brown, slovenly overcoat to keep it from getting wet, we distinctly heard the muffled clank of his side arms, which hung from his belt, but fortunately for us, probably, *underneath* his buttoned outside coat, as we afterwards learned.

It is scarcely necessary to assure our readers that in the brief interval he stood at the foot of the bank, all the scenes of our life, and the possibilities of an immediate future, went through our mind with the quickness of a single thought; we well guessed the character of the man we had to deal with, and we knew there was but one way open to us where we stood any chance to come out first-best: that was to *get* the advantage of him and then be smart enough to *keep* it.

There we were, not twenty feet apart, he all unconscious of the presence of any man or beast; we, crouched close to the ground,

barely peering over the edge of the bank, but in a position to rise to a "charge bayonet" in a twinkling—and to bring our bayonet within a foot of the edge of the bank, and close to the breast of the enemy as he came to clamber up the bank. It seemed as though he must hear our heart as it pounded our sides like a small pile-driver; but as he started toward us, we seemed to be frozen into a sort of rigid coolness; and, in a steady, impetuous tone—just as he straightened up to give the bound over the bank—we commanded "Halt!" and suiting the action to the word brought our bayonet and the muzzle of our cocked musket within a foot or two of his breast.

He gave a sudden start, and an exclamation of surprise, as he quickly realized the position in which he was placed. Almost instantly, however, he steadied up, and coolly, with a voice altogether too pleasant and cordial to be honest, exclaimed :

"Why, good evenin' sir! You're a good ways from camp, ain't yer? I didn't expect to find soldiers so close to where I live."

"You can't 'most always tell where you'll find my kind of soldiers," we replied. "One thing I wan't to tell you, though, and that is, if you make a single move with your hands as if to reach for a pistol or other arm, or attempt to run either toward or from me, I'll blow you into the middle of kingdomcome—do you understand?"

"Well, yes; I understand; but, ha-ha-ha—I say, friend, yer needn't be dangerous, 'cause I'm a friend to the Yankees—an' I'm all right on the goose, yer know, eh?"

"Exactly; this miserable country is full of 'friends to the Yankees'—only it isn't," we replied; "Climb up here on the bank, but beware of my warning, or you're a dead man."

"But, yer not goin' to take me prisoner, are you?" he asked. "Why," said he, "I live right down here a mile or so, an' I was just goin' over to Jim Giles' to borrow a little meal of him till I could go to mill—yer ain't goin' to stop me, are ye?"

He was a very tall, lank, swarthy fellow, about forty years of age as nearly as we could judge; his hair was long, and he had a ponderous whisker which hung in a tangled mass nearly to his waist, and he was altogether a dangerous looking individual. We saw that, because of his overcoat being over his firearms, we had

an advantage of him that we could hold, if we only used sufficient vigilance. We saw, too, that he realized this, and that the object he hoped to gain by his parleying was to throw us off our guard enough to give him a chance to get to his pistols; but having him in our power, and believing we could hold it, we rather consented in our mind to permit him to talk a little, to see what he had to say. We told him, in answer to his last, that we considered it a rather singular time of night to be going to a neighbor's to borrow meal and that he must consider himself our prisoner, and that he must do our bidding; or, refusing to obey our orders promptly, it would be at his peril.

"Well, I'll be d—d!" said he; "your the most unaccommodatenist feller I ever seed; ain't yer goin' to let me go on about my business, an' not delay me from goin' over to neighbor Giles place?"

"No, sir!" we replied. "I want you to climb up here without any further words about it, put your hands behind your back, and march ahead of this bayonet and loaded musket into camp; in the morning if you are found to be the pink of innocence, as you claim, you can proceed to your neighbor's place or elsewhere. Come, climb up here!"

He was a persistent fellow, however, and must have been recklessly brave, or he would never have taken the chances he did. His daring, too, confirmed us as to his character; and well was he fitted for the business in which he was engaged. After our last order, he made a sort of half-motion, as if to spring up to the level, but then he settled back again, and striking the ground with his clinched fist he declared:

"See here, my young chap, I'm a peaceable citizen, and I've a right to go where I please; and I just reckon I'm going to go through this line, if I have to go over your dead body—yer can't fool with this chicken, not by a d—d sight; yer hear me?"

Right at this point your "uncle's" dander began to stand on end; we felt sure the matter had come to a crisis, and the rough customer was not going to surrender without a sanguinary row. The first thought that flashed through our mind was to let him pass; but that cowardly idea could not long be entertained in a heart that prided itself somewhat upon its patriotic impulses and

soldierly qualities—as ours did at that time. The next thought was to pull the trigger and send him heels-over-head into eternity. And yet, while on the very point of ending the matter in this way—which the circumstances seemed to warrant—our heart relented at the idea of shedding blood, until no possible way was left to avoid it. All this and much more passed through our mind in little more than a twinkling, and he had scarcely stopped speaking when, in a voice and manner that must have convinced him that the end of “foolishness” had come, we replied:

“Look here, my dear fellow, I do not wish to shoot you down like a dog, particularly as I have you completely in my power; but I give you one last chance for your life; if you do not obey my every command, now, on the instant that I give it, I shall blow you to pieces as certain as you are now living; now, then, you know the terms, and you can choose for yourself.”

“Well,” he muttered with a fearful oath, “what do you want me to do first?”

“I want you to climb up here, swing your hands around back of you and clasp them, outside your overcoat.”

“All right, here I come, he said, as he nimbly sprang first to the level and then to his feet, slinging his arms behind him and locking his hands as ordered, and with a precision of movement that too well told that he was no stranger to hard military drill. “Now,” he said reluctantly, “what in h—— next do yer want yer dog to do?”

“I want you to march steadily along down to the railroad track, then turn north and follow the center of the track until we reach military headquarters, where I shall turn you over to the provost marshal—but, mind you, do not dare to unclasp your hands or move them from their present position. Forward, march!”

Upon reaching the track we espied the next adjoining picket, who was approaching the railroad end of his beat, and we told him we were leaving our post, and to take charge of it, and then we took up our line of march, with our prisoner a few inches ahead of our bayonet-point.

“Why,” he broke out pretty soon, “these bushes must be chock full o’ you ‘blue devils,’ ain’t they?”

We told him there were a few around those parts.

"When did yer put out that line of pickets?" he inquired.

"Well, we put out that line just in time to pick you up, didn't we?" we replied.

"I reckon yer did," he answered. "That line wasn't out afore tonight, I'll bet yer a coon. I never was so much surprised in my life as when I run squar ag'inst you. How far is it in to the Yankee camp?"

"About two miles and a half."

Then he quieted down, and did not speak again until we had nearly reached headquarters; though, every little while he would turn his head to see how near that bayonet and cocked gun was to his back. At last he said:

"I say, partner, yer ain't goin' to march me up to headquarters in this shape, like a mad-dog, are yer—let me walk along side of you like a respectable gentleman, now that we are in sight of camp, and be a little decent about it, won't yer?"

"I am not borrowing much trouble about the 'decency' or respectability of this business," we responded; it is a plain case of duty, and you suit *me* ever so much better just where you are; so don't give us any more of your suggestions; if I think of any plan that will suit me better, I'll let you know."

"Well, I reckon you're the most persistentest cuss about holdin' an advantage when you've got it, that ever seen; but yer can just bet yer boots that yer done the right thing fer yerself when you held onto the advantage that yer got in the start."

Then he muttered something about being a fool for sticking to the railroad track so long—he might have know they'd a put pickets out further every night, etc. He grew exceedingly nervous as we neared our destination, and we felt almost sure at times that he was resolved upon making a break for his liberty. But by repeating to him occasionally what the certain penalty of such a movement would be, he finally gave up and walked straight for the commandant's headquarters, which were located close to the track.

We were met by two guards who took charge of the prisoner, until we reported to the marshal, when he was placed in irons, and the next day instead of being permitted to "go over to his

neighbor Giles's to get some meal," he was sent to the military prison at Louisville.

The marshal ordered us to return to our beat, and as we wended our way back, we felt as though our clothes had somehow got too big for us, as we began to shrink down from the high pitch of excitement the taking of our first prisoner had caused us; and all the next day we felt as though we had been squeezed through a clothes-wringer, or been enjoying a long run of nightmare.





## THE OLD SETTLER.

EVERY community is blessed with its "old settler"—the old chap who can tell you how many deer and bear he has killed "not twenty rods from where your house now stands." He delights to tell how many hard days' work he did with only three small potatoes and a roasted chipmonk to eat; and who was the first baby born in the town, and how they sent for him to preside, because he happened to be the only man in the region who knew what was good for babies. He walks around among the modern settlers with all the airs possible for an original "developer" and carries the conviction to every heart that he, the old settler, is ever so much more than an everlastingly "wise injun." He can kick a neighbor's dog clear across the street, and it's all right; because he is the "old settler," and emphatically the privileged character. When he comes into a town meeting, everybody, for a moment, dries up, and grabs onto a more respectful run of sentences, and when they presume to advance an idea they involuntarily turn and address the old settler in the hope that he may nod an approving smile, or smile an approving nod; if they get it, they laugh right out; if his countenance clouds over, then the speaker very quickly sits down, leaving an impression that he "didn't say anything, nohow," and didn't try to. An "old settler" can tell one story over more times, successfully, than anybody else. He has but a small stock, generally, because a story without himself as the hero, isn't any story at all; and in order to be plausible, he dare not hero himself too often for fear it might get what this age terms "thin." Even the naked truth gets thin enough after you have listened to it four or five thou-

sand times. There will be a terrible vacancy in our western communities when all the first settlers die; there will be a happy lonesomeness prevailing for a long time, but after awhile it would seem sort of good to have them come back again—just to get off that story once more; it would seem so old-fashioned, like. The “old settler” is happy, because he knows if it hadn’t been for him the country would never have developed; hence, he can afford to be arrogant, uncivil, and imagine himself a real actuality, and everybody else mere accidentals. He nearly always says “no” to every progressive movement, because it shows he has a mind of his own, that he is the only man who “*knows* to the contrary,” and besides he wants things kept just as near the “good old way” as possible. All in all, the “old settler” is an eccentric old gimlet, and aside from keeping up a perfectly freezing dignity, and being perfectly harmless, is of about as much public use, as a bull is a private success in a china shop.







## GATHERING WILD-CATS.

LAST winter it was the wolves that annoyed our good people who lived in the suburbs of the city, and along the bluff and ravine ranges in rear of the town—up and down the valley. We made a raid upon the wolves, however, and abated the nuisance. This winter, a streak of wild-cats seem to be on. A few days ago we began to feel it a duty we owed to posterity, to change the wild-cat condition of things; and so, we hired a cheap boy—a regular baked-mud specimen of street urchin, who had long since become a stranger to fear, and to soap—and started for the hills. We always have use for such a boy when we go out to gather wild-cats. We promised him that if he would go along and carry the cats, and do all that we required of him on the trip, and would skin the cats and dry the hides after we got home, he would be entitled to one-third interest in the peltry.

We reached a rocky ridge early, and just about the time the varmints had gotten comfortably settled in their holes after their night's raid on the hen-roosts of the neighborhood. It was not long before we found a hole in the rocks accompanied by what we considered infallible signs of the presence of cats, and we at once prepared to clear that hole of its occupant or occupants as the number of cats therein might indicate, and we told the boy to button up his coat and prepare to go in on a tour of inspection whilst we would remain outside and just above the hole, and "polish them off" when they came out, with our long-handled tomahawk.

The boy, although he was probably dead to fear, seemed to retain a slight smattering of good judgment, though his appear-

ance didn't seem to indicate that he possessed the slightest discrimination between a proper and an improper proposition.

He looked into the hole, turned and looked at the "signs," and then at us, and said: "See here, boss, what do you take me fur, anyway?" We told him we took him "fur" to go into holes to drive out the animals; that if we had taken him along just for an ornament, we wouldn't have agreed to pay him such an immense margin of profits; that a one-third interest in the net proceeds of a wild-cat hunt, when we let ourself loose, was not to be sneezed at.. He looked down into the hole again, and then asked about how much his share would amount to; and we informed him that it depended altogether upon how he panned out as a "driver"—that if he drove enough cats under our weapon, there wasn't any telling how many hundred dollars it would figure up. Then he wanted to know the best way to drive them out; and we told him to go in feet foremost and allow the cats to "shut down" on his pant-legs, or on his coat-tail, and then to come out with his game—let them drive *him* out; if they didn't bite, then he was to drive *them* out. He said he would go into that one hole, just to show us he wasn't afraid of wild-cats, but if he didn't bring out a hundred dollars worth of cats the first pass, he would quit and go home—'cause it was worth that much to go into a hole where "signs" wuz so fresh.

Pulling his old hat over his ears and drawing his head down inside his coat-collar, he backed down into the hole, and soon was out of sight, whilst we squared ourself just one side of the mouth, with tomahawk raised and muscle swollen up like a hickory-nut.

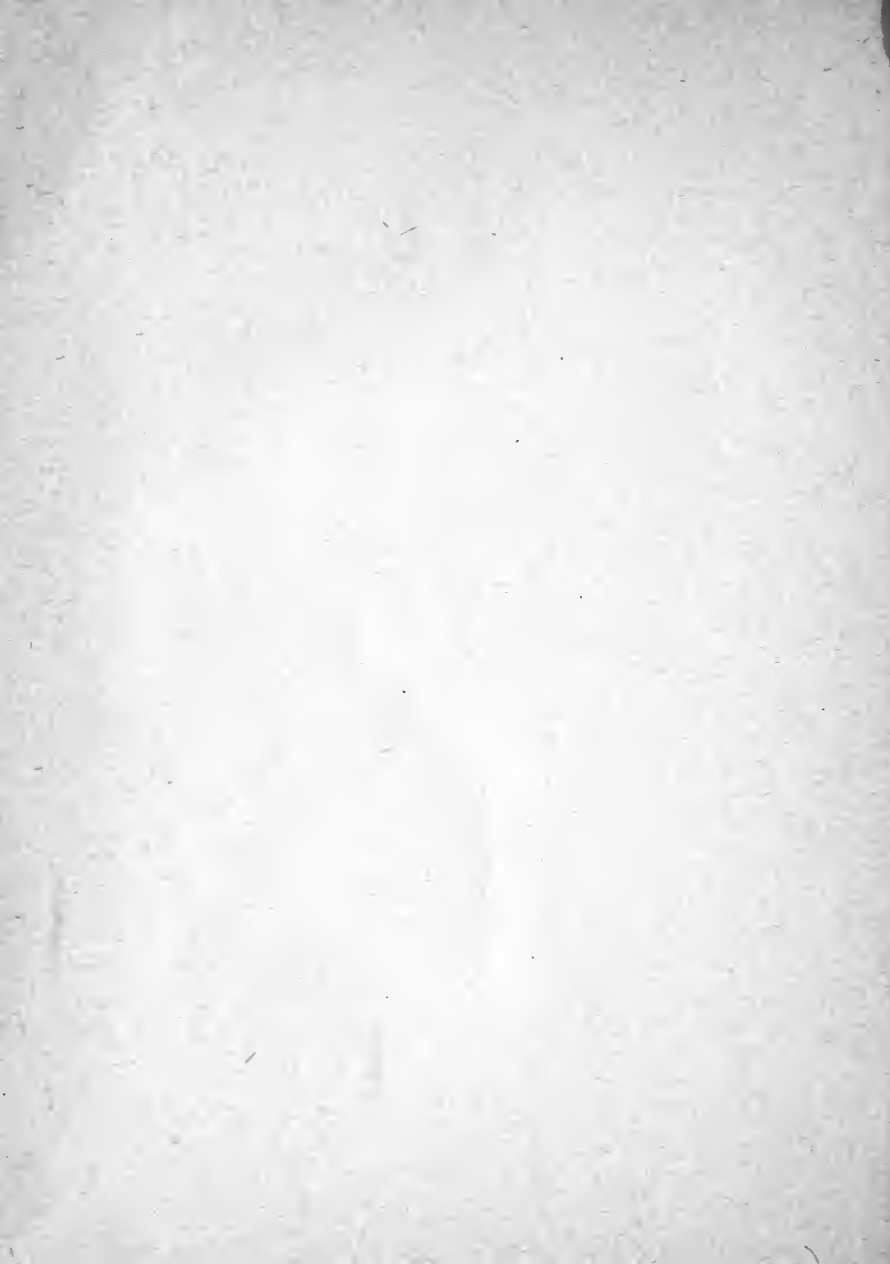
"How goes it, Si?" we yelled down the hole.

"I'm a gittin' 'im!" he yelled back, "He's snappin' at me now, an'—an' oh, lordy—look out, I'm a comin'—he, whoop!—wah!—phew—ew—here we come, dod-rot us!"

Just at that Si came rolling and tumbling up out of the hole, and, sticking tightly to the broadest part of his dilapidated breeches was the cat; we went for him with our tomahawk at the first glimpse we caught of him, and then—oh, shades of the stately cedar! The cat commenced to defend his position, after the true fashion of his race, and quickly did we receive his copious and unerring shafts. Great guns and little fishes! Before we

could reach a place of safety, or a place where we could lie down and roll in the mud and hate ourself to death, we had become a walking pest-house. Si had brought out the wrong kind of a cat. Si had rolled clear to the foot of the hill, whilst we turned a somersault over a precipice fifteen feet high, and struck in a friendly mud-hole—but even that beat a skunk-hole all to death. We put ourself to soak over night in a solution of weak lye and ammonia, and the next day made out to appear as usual, but everybody wanted to know why we looked so “bleached out.” Poor Si, we haven’t seen him since; but we feel sure he is satisfied without calling on us for a further share of the dividends of our wild-cat hunt.

















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